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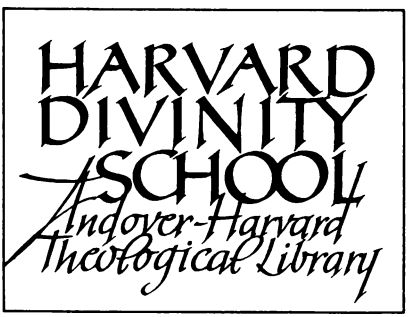
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A Martineau Year Book

Extracts from Sermons

BY

JAMES MARTINEAU
LL. D., D. D., D. C. L., S. T. D., LITT. D.

Selected and Arranged by Fanny Louise Weaver

With Portrait

BOSTON
JAMES H. WEST COMPANY

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PREFACE.

THESE extracts are taken from the two collections of Dr. Martineau's sermons called "Endeavors After the Christian Life" and "Hours of Thought on Sacred Things," and from his little volume of "Home Prayers." They are offered in this form in the hope that something within the covers of this little book may, perhaps, on some day of the year, strike a key-note in the spiritual life of some earnest reader, or touch with healing some sorrowing heart. To borrow Dr. Martineau's own words in his Preface to the first volume of "Hours of Thought,"—"If the following pages should foster any high impulse in those who have the work of life before them, or shed any light on those who have the sorrows of life behind them, I shall be content not to have withheld it."

F. L. W.

BOSTON, August 28, 1905.

A Martineau Year Book

:: JANUARY ::

JANUARY 1

O GOD, our everlasting Refuge! Thou art our shade by night, our light by day; and when we awake we are still with thee. With grateful hearts we lay at thy feet the folded hours when thou knowest us but we know not thee; and with joy receive from thy hand once more our open task and conscious communion with thy life and thought. For a moment we pause upon the threshold of a new day, and listen for thy voice: for we would not enter, Lord, with unprepared soul, and cannot take a step without thy blessing.

What are we, O Lord, that thou shouldst make us sharers in thy everlasting work, and give us entrance into thy everlasting rest? It is shameful to think how we have defaced thine image, grieved thy Spirit, quitted thy presence, and strayed by ourselves. When we lose thy hand, we are without strength or stay, and sink into the fretful cares and miserable pride of an unloving mind. Oh, call back thy wanderers, gracious

Shepherd of our souls, and take us to thy fold again. And if ever we are tempted to forget thee; if our hearts are lifted up in vain security and we know not what spirit we are of, come with thy rebukes, O Lord, and lay them low, till they turn and seek a childlike rest in thee. And if ever we faint under any appointed cross and say "It is too hard to bear," may we look to the steps of the Man of sorrows toiling on to Calvary, and pass freely into thy hand, and become one with him and thee. Let no delusion more come between us and thee. Dedicate us to the joyful service of thy will; and own us as thy children in time and in eternity.

JANUARY 2

Without the stirring of divine qualities within us, without some consciousness of that which we ascribe to the All-perfect, the names and descriptions by which he is made known to us would be empty words, as idly sent to us as treatises of sound to the deaf, or some "high discourse of reason" to the fool. All that we believe without us, we first feel within us; and it is the one sufficient proof of the grandeur and awfulness of our nature, that we have faith in God; for no merely finite being can possibly believe the infinite.

JANUARY 3

God, by the very immensity of his nature, is a stationary being, — perfect, and therefore unchangeable: and so far as Jesus Christ was "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever"; so far as one uniform mind and power possessed him, as one sacred purpose was impressed upon his life, — so far is he the emblem of Deity; affording us, in speech, in feeling, in will, in act, an idea of God, which nothing borrowed from the material creation or mortal life can at all approach.

JANUARY 4

When the mother calls her children to her knees to speak to them of God, she is *herself* the greatest object in their affections. It is by her power over them that God becomes Venerable; by the purity of her eye that he becomes Holy; by the silence of the hour that he becomes Awful; by the tenderness of her tones that he becomes Dear. . . . The thoughts which constitute religion are too vast and solemn to remain subordinate. They are germs of a growth which, with true nurture, must burst into independent life and overshadow the whole soul. When the mind, beginning to be busy for itself, ponders the ideas of the infinite and eternal, it detects, as if by sudden inspiration, the immensity of the rela-

tions which it sustains to God and immortality: the old formulas of religious instruction break their husk and give forth the seeds of wonder and love; every thing that before seemed great and worthy is dwarfed; and human affinities and duties sink into nothingness compared with the heavenly world which has been discovered.

JANUARY 5

There is a crisis when every faithful son of God is agitated by a fierce controversy between the earthly and the divine elements of his nature. Self and the flesh seductively whisper, "Thou hast a life of many necessities; earn thy bread and eat it; and pay thyself for all thy trouble with a warm hearth and a soft bed." The voice of God thunders in reply, "Thy life is short, thy work is great, thy God is near, thy heaven is far; do I not send thee forth, armed with thought and speech, and a strong right hand, to contend with the evil and avenge the good? Indulge no more, or I shall leave thee; do thy best, and faint not: take up thy free-will, and come with me."

JANUARY 6

It was the peculiarity of the greatness of Jesus that it — stooped, I will not say, but — penetrated

without stooping, to the humblest wants; not simply stepped casually aside to look at the most ignominious sorrows, but went directly to them, and lived wholly in them; scattered glorious miracles and sacred truths along the hidden by-paths and in the mean recesses of existence; serving the mendicant and the widow, blessing the child, healing the leprosy of body and soul, and kneeling to wash even the traitor's feet. In *himself* was the serene and unapproachable dignity of a higher nature, a mind at one with the universe and its Author; in his *acts*, a frugal respect for the most neglected elements of human life, declaring that he came not to be ministered unto but to minister.

JANUARY 7

We must go in contemplation *out of life* ere we can see how its troubles subside and are lost, like evanescent waves, in the deeps of eternity and the immensity of God. A mind that can make this migration from the scene by which it is surrounded, is removed from all vain strife of will, and gains its tranquillity without an effort; feels no difficulty in being gentle and serene, but rather wonders that it could ever be tempted from its pure repose.

JANUARY 8

How welcome would it often be to many a child of anxiety and toil, to be suddenly transferred from the heat and din of the city, the restlessness and worry of the mart, to the midnight garden or the mountain-top! And like refreshment does a high faith, with its infinite prospects ever open to the heart, afford to the worn and weary: no laborious travels are needed for the devout mind; for it carries within it Alpine heights and starlit skies, which it may reach with a moment's thought and feel at once the loneliness of Nature and the magnificence of God.

JANUARY 9

In the eye of one who looks on his fellow-man as a compound being, the immortal element imparts, not meanness, but a species of sanctity, to the mortal; just as the worshiper feels that of the temple whose space has been set apart for God the very stones are sacred, and the pavement claims a venerating tread.

JANUARY 10

Nothing less than the majesty of God and the powers of the world to come can maintain the peace and sanctity of our homes, the order and

serenity of our minds, the spirit of patience and tender mercy in our hearts. Then only shall we wisely economize moments when we anticipate for ourselves an eternity, and lose no grain of wisdom, when we discern the glorious and immortal structure which its successive accumulations shall raise. Then will even the merest drudgery of duty cease to humble us, when we transfigure it by the glory of our own spirit. Seek ye then the things that are above, where your life is hid with Christ in God.

JANUARY 11

When Adam entered life, the *earth* was glad and jubilant; when Christ was born, the joy was testified by angels, and the anthem sounded from the *sky*. The "first man" subdued the physical world; the "last man" won the immortal heaven.

JANUARY 12

Ere Jesus became the Christ, he was led into the desert to be tempted. And before the Messiah within us — the messenger-spirit of God in the soul — can make his inspiration felt, and render his voice articulate and clear, we too must have been called to severe and lonely struggles with the power of sin. On no lighter terms can the natural man pass into the spiritual, and

Deity shape forth a dwelling within the deeps of our humanity.

JANUARY 13

There comes a time to us all when the sense of responsibility starts up and rebukes our anxiety for ease; tells us that we are living, fast and once for all, a life that enlarges to the scale of eternity, and is embosomed everywhere in God; bids us spring from our collapse of selfishness and sleep, take up the full dimensions of our strength, and go forth to do much, if it be possible, and at least to do worthily and well.

JANUARY 14

He who gave us the Gospel was "the Man of sorrows"; and the glad tidings of great joy were pronounced by a voice mellowed by many a sadness. And not otherwise is it with the messenger-spirit of our private hearts; which does not become the Christ, the consecrated revealer of what is holy, unless it be much acquainted with grief. Heaven and God are best discerned through tears; scarcely perhaps discerned at all without them.

JANUARY 15

The primitive gladness of childhood is that of

a bounded and limited existence, which earnestly wishes for nothing that exceeds the dimensions of possibility; of a human Paradise, about whose inclosure-line no inquiry is made; and through sorrow and the sense of sin we must issue from those peaceful gates, and make pilgrimage amid the thistle and the thorn instead of the blossom and the rose, and lie panting on the dust, instead of sleeping on the green sward, of life, before we learn through mortal weakness our immortal strength, and feel in the exile of the earth the shelter of the skies.

JANUARY 16

Children then of Nature, we are also sons of God; born of the genial earth, we are to climb the glorious heaven; and to the human lot that makes us of one blood with Adam, is added the divine liberty of being of one spirit with Christ. The severe prerogatives of an existence half-divine are ours. To wear away life in unproductive harmlessness is innocent no more: with the glory we take the cross; and, instead of slumbering at noon in Eden, must keep the midnight watch within Gethsemane.

JANUARY 17

The mere lapse of years is not life: to eat and

drink and sleep; to be exposed to the darkness and the light; to pace round in the mill of habit, and turn the wheel of wealth; to make reason our book-keeper, and turn thought into an implement of trade, — this is not life. In all this, but a poor fraction of the consciousness of humanity is awakened: and the sanctities still slumber which make it most worth while to be.

JANUARY 18

Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, alone give vitality to the mechanism of existence; the laugh of mirth that vibrates through the heart, the tears that freshen the dry wastes within, the music that brings childhood back, the prayer that calls the future near, the doubt which makes us meditate, the death which startles us with mystery, the hardship which forces us to struggle, the anxiety that ends in trust, — are the true nourishment of our natural being.

JANUARY 19

Men are exceedingly apt to imagine that nothing can be seriously *wrong* which they have *a right* to do; to forget that the license which is allowed by law may be sternly prohibited by morality.

JANUARY 20

Till it is felt that heaven is needed to complete the history of earth, till men become conscious of capacities for which their present sphere of action is too contracted, till the wants of the intellect and the affections cry aloud within them for the boundless and eternal, the distant words of Christian promise will die away ere they reach their hearts; there will be no visible infinitude of hope; and amid the incessant verbal recognition of the great hereafter, practical doubts will brood over the feelings, which will blight all true sincerity of faith.

JANUARY 21

Though our faith may go far beyond our experience, it must always be chained down by it at a distance: our conceptions of probability are limited by the analogies within our reach: the magnitude of each one's possible must bear some proportion to his actual: the invisible scenes which he imagines will be graduated by the visible which he beholds.

JANUARY 22

The pointed, distinct, and microscopic attention which we direct upon the details of human existence here is unfavorable to the comprehensive

vision of a boundless sphere: the glass through which we best look at the minutiæ near us serves but to confuse our gaze upon the stars.

JANUARY 23

In proportion as our nature rises in its nobleness does it realize its immortality. As it retires from animal grossness, from selfish meanness, from pitiable ignorance or sordid neglect, — as it opens forth into its true intellectual and moral glory, — do its doubts disperse, its affections aspire: the veil is uplifted from the future, the darkness breaks away, and the spirit walks in dignity within the Paradise of God's eternity.

JANUARY 24

God has not faded into a remembrance: he has not retired from this scene with the generations known only to tradition. His energies have no era; his sentiments cannot be obsolete; "his compassions fail not." Why, even sense and material Nature, his poorest and faintest interpreters, rebuke this foolish dream, — that he *was*, rather than *is*. They forbid us to think of him thus, were it only in the mere character of Creator. They show us, in the very structure of our globe, — in the rocks beneath our feet, — in the vast cemeteries and monuments they disclose of de-

parted races of creatures, — that creation is not single, but successive; not an act, but a process; not the work of a week or of a century, but of immeasurable ages; not, moreover, past, but continuous and everlasting; as busy, as mysterious, as vast, now, as in the darkest antiquity: so that Genesis tells the story of last week as truly as of the six days that ushered in the world's first Sabbath. Now, as of old, he that will listen with the open ear of meditation may surely hear the Lord God walking in his garden of creation in the cool of every day.

JANUARY 25

He who is not with God already, can by no path of space find the least approach: in vain would you lend him the wing of angel or the speed of light; in vain plant him here or there, — on this side of death or that: he is in the outer darkness still; having that inner blindness which would leave him in pitchy night, though, like the angel of the Apocalypse, he were standing in the sun. But ceasing all vain travels, and remaining with his foot upon this weary earth, let him subside into the depths of his own wonder and love; let the touch of sorrow, or the tears of conscience, or the toils of duty, open the hidden places of his affections; — and the distance, infinite before,

wholly disappears: and he finds, like the Patriarch, that though the stone is his pillow, and the earth his bed, he is yet in the very house of God, and at the gate of heaven.

JANUARY 26

Oh, my friends, if there be nothing celestial without us, it is only because all is earthly within; if no divine colors upon our lot, it is because the holy light is faded on the soul: if our Father seems distant, it is because we have taken our portion of goods and traveled into a far country, to set up *for ourselves,* that we may foolishly *enjoy,* rather than reverently *serve.*

JANUARY 27

The times and people that have vividly felt the proximity of God have always been characterized by hearty and productive affections; by vast enterprises and great sacrifices; by the seeds of mighty thought dropped upon the world, and the fruits of great achievements contributed to human history. In contact with every grand era in the experience of mankind will be found *the birth of a religion;* — a fresh discovery of the preternatural and mysterious; a plenary sense of God; the descent of the Holy Spirit on waiting hearts; a day of Pentecost to strong and faithful souls,

giving them the utterance of a divine persuasion, and dispersing a new gospel over the world.

JANUARY 28

Nay, of nothing may we be more sure than this; that, if we cannot sanctify our present lot, we could sanctify no other. Our heaven and our Almighty Father are there or nowhere. The obstructions of that lot are given for us to heave away by the concurrent touch of a holy spirit and labor of a strenuous will; its gloom, for us to tint with some celestial light: its mysteries are for our worship; its sorrows for our trust; its perils for our courage; its temptations for our faith. Soldiers of the cross, it is not for us, but for our Leader and our Lord, to choose the field: it is ours, taking the station which he assigns, to make it the field of truth and honor, though it be the field of death.

JANUARY 29

We are not all alike; and God does not exist for any miserable egotist alone. We are all indeed set in one infinite sphere of universal reason and conscience; but scattered over it to follow separate circles and attain every variety of altitude in faith. Like stars upon the same meridian, whose culminating points cannot be alike, we

touch our supreme heights at different elevations; and the measure which is far down on the course of one mind may be the acme of religion in another.

JANUARY 30

We find men ready enough to allow that there is no place where God is not, perhaps no time when his external power is not active in some realm or other. And why then withhold from him that internal and spiritual sphere of which all else is but the theater and the temple? Shall we coldly speculate on the physical omnipresence of the Infinite, and question the ubiquity of his moral power? — diffuse him as an atmosphere, and forget that he is Mind? — plead for his mechanical action on matter, and doubt the contact of spirit with spirit? — admit the agency of the artist on his work, and deny the embrace of the Father and the child?

JANUARY 31

To receive the promise, we must deserve the prayer, of Christ, — that we "may be kept from the evil" and "sanctified through the truth." Finding a holy of holies within us, we need not curiously ask whether its secret voices are of ourselves or of the Father. Christ felt how, within the deeps of our spiritual nature, the per-

sonalities of heaven and earth might become entwined together and indissolubly blended: "Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, and they also one in us." And so, the holy spirit within us, the spirit of Christ, and the spirit of God, are after all but one; — a blessed Trinity, our part in which gives to our souls a dignity most humbling yet august.

A Martineau Year Book

:: FEBRUARY ::

FEBRUARY 1

GOD of our life! Thy loving-kindness is new every morning and thy faithfulness keepeth watch every night. Thou comest to us in every freshness of the light; and even in the darkness it is thy shade that covers us. Our hearts, O Lord, would rise to meet thee when thou wakenest us to the service of thy will; and sink in trust before thee when thou leavest us only the shelter of thy rest.

O Thou Omniscient! look with pity on our poverty and emptiness before thee. We know nothing, love nothing, do nothing as we ought. Drawn away from the simplicity of the childlike mind, we wander in mazes where thy truth is not, and turn the face of our pride from the pure shining of thy light. Burdened with the cares of a self-enclosed heart, we often do our work in shameful bonds, and with no free surrender to the calls of gentle affection and the whispers of thy gracious Spirit. O merciful Father! we spread our failures and nothingness before thee. In thine in-

finite plenitude of grace is all that we need: whatever we can desire is eternally present in thee. Oh, deepen the sacred thirst within us, to lead us to thy fountain of life; and make good the blessed word, "He that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh shall find, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

FEBRUARY 2

O Thou whose infinite majesty looketh on us from the heavens and the earth, but whose grace and truth shine in the face of Jesus Christ! more and more soften thy great glory to us through the pure and tender light of his spirit; and enable us to trust thee with his trust, to love thee with his love, to be baptized for life with the baptism that he was baptized with, and drink in death the cup that he drank of. As thou didst dwell in him and bring thy consecration to our humanity, vouchsafe, O Lord, to abide with us, and stay with us till eventide; that we may do all our works as in thy sight, and sweeten our temper with thy constant spirit, and quiet our sorrows with thine inward peace. In the turmoil of the world and the failure of lower hopes, may we remember our real life which is hid with thee; and where our treasure is, there may our heart be also. Keep us by thy mercy in fitness for our

change; healing our sins, helping our weakness, sustaining our mortal nature, till we are called to thy higher service.

FEBRUARY 3

The aim which God assigns to us as our highest is indeed the direct reverse of that which we propose to ourselves. He would have us in perpetual conflict; — we crave an unbroken peace. He keeps us ever on the march; — we pace the green sod by the way with many a sigh for rest. He throws us on a rugged universe; — and our first care is to make it smooth. His resolve is to demand from us, without ceasing, a living power, a force fresh from the spirit he has given; ours, to get into such settled ways that life may almost go of itself, with scarce the trouble of winding up.

FEBRUARY 4

The primitive conflict with Nature, which makes a Hercules, rises into the conflict with man, which makes the hero, and culminates in that infinitely higher conflict with the spirit of evil, which is impersonated in Christ. We instinctively do homage in some sort to them all; only admiring the former as manly, and reverencing the last as godlike.

FEBRUARY 5

The battle of life is not now, so often as of old, thrust upon us from without; it does not give us the first blow, which it were poltroonery to fly; but it is internal and invisible; it has to be sought and found by voluntary enterprise; it is not with palpable flesh and blood beneath the sun, but with viewless spirits that cling to us in the dark.

FEBRUARY 6

In an old and complicated structure of society, the number is multiplied of those who exist in a state of benumbed habit; who walk through their years methodically, not finding it needful to be more than half-awake; who take their passage through human life in an easy chair, and no more think of any self-mortifying work than of the ancient pilgrimage on foot; and are so pleased with the finish and varnish of the world around them, as to fancy demons and dangers all cleaned out. And thus the perfected customs, the smooth, macadamized ways of life, which are all excellent as facilities for swifter activity, have the effect of putting activity to sleep; the means of helping us to our proper ends become the means of our wholly forgetting them; and looking out of the windows, we leave behind the commission

on which we are sent, and set up as travelers for pleasure.

FEBRUARY 7

The shrinking from difficulty, the dread of ridicule, the love of ease, which drain off the sap of a man's moral earnestness, soon dry up the sources of all moral faith from the very roots of him. Though in one sense it is true that he must believe before he acts, yet assuredly he will not long go on believing when he has ceased to act.

FEBRUARY 8

The rule of a divine spirit over our whole nature is, in truth, of all things the most natural; natural as the blossom that crowns the tree, without which it would miss half its beauty, and all its fruit. Nothing can be more offensive to a good mind than the eagerness to claim, for some portions of our time, a kind of holiday-escape from the presence of duty and the consecration of pure affections; to thrust off all noble thoughts and sacred influences into the most neglected corner of existence; and drive away religion, as if it were a haggard necromancer that must some time come, instead of a guardian-angel that must never go.

FEBRUARY 9

It were shameful to sanction the low-minded sentiment which so often says of *early life*, that it is the time for enjoyment, and makes this an excuse for dispensing with every thing else, and declining all demands upon the hardness of the "good soldier of Jesus Christ." According to the canons of this wretched criticism, life would have no secret unity: it would be no sacred epic, sung throughout by any constant inspiration, but a monster of incongruity; its first volume, a jest-book; its second, a table of interest; and its last, a mixture of the satire and the liturgy. For my own part, I can form no more odious image of human life than a youth of levity and pleasure, followed by a maturity and age of severity and pietism.

FEBRUARY 10

In moments of deep sorrow, or high faith; when we either fear the last extremity, or hope for the dawn of new deliverance; when we are sinking to the point of lowest depression, or struggling on the wing of highest resolution; in startling agonies of duty that goad our jaded strength; in helpless vigils, when we must sit with folded hands and wait; in all crises of duty, of misery, of joy, of aspiration; — how little can the beat of

any clock count the elements of our existence then! The moments are stretched into an awful fullness; and while the midnight star strikes the meridian wire, we pass through more than common years. Hence it is that no familiarity with physical periods can induce us to think lightly of the contents of life. If God, affluent in eternities, is lavish of time upon his universe, he is economic of it with us: filling it with unutterable experiences, and charging it with irrevocable opportunities. With so small an allowance of it here, every part of it may well appear a priceless treasure.

FEBRUARY 11

Some men are eminent for what they *possess:* some, for what they *achieve:* others, for what they *are. Having, Doing, and Being,* constitute the three great distinctions of mankind, and the three great functions of their life. And though they are necessarily all blended, more or less, in each individual, it is seldom difficult to say which of them is prominent in the impression left upon us by our fellow-man.

FEBRUARY 12

To get good, is animal: to do good, is human: to be good, is divine. The true use of a man's

possessions is to help his work: and the best end of all his work is to show us what he is. The noblest workers of our world bequeath us nothing so great as the image of themselves. Their *task*, be it ever so glorious, is historical and transient: the majesty of their *spirit* is essential and eternal.

FEBRUARY 13

While to some God gives it to show themselves *through* their work, to others he assigns it to show themselves without even the opportunity of work. He sends them transparent into this world; and leaves us nothing to gather and infer. The angels appointed to guard the issues of the pure life, seem rather to have taken their station at its fountains, and to pour into it a sanctity at first. Such beings live simply *to express themselves:* to stand between heaven and earth, and mediate for our dull hearts.

FEBRUARY 14

It is with Christ-like minds, as it was with Christ himself. His divine work was not in the task that he did, but in the image which he left. You cannot say that there was any great business of existence, estimable by time, which he set himself to achieve, and which you can even imagine to be broken off by his departure. He lived

enough to manifest the heavenly spirit and solemn dignity of life. At thirty years he passed away: and no one, I suppose, was ever heard to lament that he did not stay till sixty. He thought indeed, as the faithful must ever think, that there was a "work given him to do"; unaware that, by his very manner of devotion to it, it was already done. So eager was he worthily to finish it, that, of all his sorrows, to be cut short in it was the bitterest cup that might not pass from him except he drank it; unconscious that the spirit and the conquest of that agony did actually bring it to the sublimest close.

FEBRUARY 15

He who will persistently follow his highest impulses and convictions, who will trust only these amid noisier claims, and constrain himself to go with them alike in their faintness and their might, shall not find his struggle everlasting: his wrestlings shall become fewer and less terrible: the hand of God, so dim to him and doubtful at the first, shall in the end be the only thing that is clear and sure: his best shall be his strongest too.

FEBRUARY 16

There is, there can be, no list of actions, no

scheme of habits, that will permanently represent your duty, and stand as a perpetual diagram of right. Only while it is yet unrealized, while it rises ideally above you and reproaches your slurred and broken lines of order, is it truly the emblem of your obligations: the moment you overtake it, and fall into coincidence with it, its function is gone, and it guides and teaches you no more; it becomes simply what *you are*, which is always parted by an interval from what you *ought to be*.

FEBRUARY 17

We must rise by successive stages, not by perennial flight. We have always something to overtake; and there is a distance, but too appreciable, between what we are and what we ought to be, — between what we wish and what we reverence. This distance can be recovered only by successive paroxysms of effort, prolonged into patient perseverence. We cannot hope to be released from this demand upon our half-reluctant powers, and must hold ourselves ready, with resolute alacrity, now to lash and now to cheer them on.

FEBRUARY 18

If the fairest gifts are not to be turned into haunting griefs, it can only be by following in

the ways of duty and denial along which they manifestly lead; and, while yet they look upon us, like the eye of Christ, with a sacred love, resolving on that quiet self-surrender which shall meet their solemn claim, and prevent our ever hearing again the words, "Yet lackest thou one thing."

FEBRUARY 19

As if in acknowledgment of the mystery of God, as if with an instinctive feeling that his being is the meeting-place of light and shade, and that in approaching him we must stand on the confines between the seen and the unseen; all nations and all faiths of cultivated men have chosen the *twilight* hour, morning and evening, for their devotion; and so it has happened that all round the earth on the bordering circle between the darkness and the day, a zone of worshipers has been ever spread, looking forth for the Almighty Tenant of space, one-half towards the east, brilliant with the dawn, the other into the hemisphere of night, descending on the west.

FEBRUARY 20

In imagining what is holy and divine, we take flight to other worlds, and conceive that there the film must fall away and all adorable realities

burst upon the sight. Alas! what reason have we to think any other station in the universe more sanctifying than our own? There is none, so far as we can tell, under the more immediate touch of God; none whence sublimer deeps are open to adoration; none murmuring with the whisper of more thrilling affections or ennobled as the theater of more glorious duties. The dimness we deplore, no traveling would cure; the most perfect of observatories will not serve the blind; we carry our darkness with us; and instead of wandering to fresh scenes, and blaming our planetary atmosphere, and flying over creation for a purer air, it behooves us in simple faith to sit by our own wayside and cry, "Lord, that we may receive our sight." Those to whom the earth is not consecrated will find their heaven profane.

FEBRUARY 21

God "besets us behind and before" in another sense. He pervades the successions of time as well as the fields of space, and occupies eternity no less than immensity. The imagination faints beneath the weight of ages which crowd upon it in the simplest meditation on his being, and in the utterance of the most familiar of our prayers. We call him the "*God of our fathers*"; and we

feel that there is some stability at center, while we can tell our cares to One listening at our right hand, by whom theirs are remembered and were removed; who yesterday took pity on their quaint perplexities, and smiles to-day on ours, not wiser yet, but just as bitter and as real; and who accepts their strains of happy and emancipated love, while putting into our hearts the song of exile and the plaint of aspiration.

FEBRUARY 22

Surely there occur to every uncorrupted heart some stirrings of a diviner life; some consciousness, obscure and transient it may be, but deep and authoritative, of a nobler calling than we have yet obeyed; a rooted dissatisfaction with self, a suspicion of some poison in the will, a helpless veneration for somewhat that is gazed at with a sigh as out of reach. It is the touch of God upon us.

FEBRUARY 23

It is not, apparently, the design of Heaven that we should be permitted to seek rest and to desire ease in this aspiring life; and it is the vain attempt to make compromise between duty and indulgence that creates the corrosions of conscience, and the perpetual disquietudes of spirit,

and disappoints our own ideal from day to day and from year to year. There is no way to the peace of God but by absolute self-abandonment to his will that whispers within us, without reservation of happiness or self.

FEBRUARY 24

The difficulty of bringing the heart to a pure simplicity of faith was no accident peculiar to the personal ministry of our Lord. Proceeding from causes which human nature reproduces in every age, it still interrupts the genuine influence of his religion: which multitudes hold and profess on false and insufficient grounds, adducing every variety of excuse for sanctioning its authority; but which few receive, as too great to be patronized, and too true to be proved.

FEBRUARY 25

A devout man does his duty better than another, because he sees his position more completely; gazes over the wide field of his relations visible and invisible; exaggerates nothing from its proximity, and overlooks nothing from its distance; but, with the clear sense of moral proportion, receives from all the true impression, and gives to all the fit affection. He does not render his mental view false by ignoring the whole re-

gion that lies beyond experience, and treating it as if it had no existence; or fever his passions and fret away his peace by imprisoning the whole energies of his nature within some narrow object, — a section only of the life which they are qualified to fill. It is because his *mind is* right, that his *hand does* right.

FEBRUARY 26

It is for God to rule and guard our conscience, not for our conscience to take care of God. And to every pure submissive mind his voice within is heard rebuking this presumptuous spirit, and repeating the words of Christ: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

FEBRUARY 27

From the love of man we do not necessarily rise into the love of God; but from any true love of God we inevitably descend into the love of man, — his child, his image, the object of his benediction, and the sharer of his immortality.

FEBRUARY 28

Wherever we see in our fellow-men the outward life which *may possibly* be the fruit of religious principle, though perhaps explicable as some inferior growth, we have certainly no right

to deny the existence of the nobler root; but must accept their service of man as presumption of their fidelity to God.

FEBRUARY 29

And *once* at least there has been a CHRIST; not seeking to thrust up human nature from below, but to raise it from above; knowing that its earth could produce nothing, except for its pure and spreading heaven; and so, coming down upon it, as an angel soul from the highest regions of the spirit; speaking seldom to it of its happiness, constantly of its holiness; dwelling little on the arrangements, and much on the responsibilities of life; pitying its woes, as it pities them itself in moments of truest aspiration, not with mere nervous sympathy, but with godlike and healing mercy; assuming its place in the midst of God, and on the surface of eternity, and from this sublime position as a base computing its obligations and uttering oracles of its destiny.

A Martineau Year Book

:: MARCH ::

March 1

AGAIN, O Lord of life, we welcome thy holy light, and accept the trust of another day from thee. Thou art the ever-returning dawn to all our darkness: and there is no night, of forgetfulness or sorrow, that turns not back to thee. Sun of our souls, whom we too faintly see! let thy glory break through the clouds of our lower minds, and kindle the fires of pure affection that make us one with thee.

Why art thou ever hid from us, O Father everlasting! Thou art everywhere and fillest all things, — our conscience with thy witness, the hearts of the faithful with thy Spirit, life with thy Providence, and heaven with thy redemption. Yet how seldom do we walk with thee, and move beneath thy searching eye, and feel for the guidance of thy hand! We are ashamed of our sinful blindness, that we discern thee not, and go to think our thoughts and do our works alone. In thy forgiveness be pleased, O Thou Lóng-suffer-

ing, to take the film away, and let in the new life of thy comforting presence. Until we rest in thee, and freely yield our will to thine, there is in us nothing strong and nothing holy; and we do but weary ourselves with chasing the shadows of selfish desire. Wean us, O God, from every secret wish, from every vain expectation, which we dare not spread before thee for thy congenial blessing. And by asking nothing for ourselves and entirely trusting thee, may our yoke become easy and our burden light.

MARCH 2

Father of spirits! we bless thee for every gracious and holy soul that hath led us nearer to thee, and especially for him who to us hath chiefly been the way, the truth, and the life. We bless thee that, in every darker passage of our pilgrimage, in the strife of temptation, in the hour of danger, in solitude of spirit, in the weakness of anguish, and the paths of death, we may fix our eye on him as the leader of faithful souls, who hath divinely borne our woes and passed to thy glorious rest. Give us wisdom to walk as he walked; and by keeping ever close to thee may we too have strength to overcome the world. May no pleading of indolence or fear, no levity

or vainglory, no coldness of faith and love, withhold us from strenuously doing thy will and finishing thy work.

O Thou who art love and dwellest in love! teach us herein to be followers of thee, as dear children. Never may we shut our hearts against the sorrows of even the unthankful and the evil. Make us organs of thy tender mercy, to soothe the wretched, to lift the penitent, to seek and to save the lost; till all shall at length know themselves thy children, and be one with each other and with thee.

MARCH 3

Personal repentance, the transference of the life from conventionalism to conviction, the kindling of pure and productive affections, must precede and usher in the reign of God upon the earth; men must truly venerate the Deity within them, and he will not be slow to descend with his peace on society around them. The holy and divine must first be recognized and enshrined in the individual and private heart; and then will follow its wider conquests over humanity.

MARCH 4

Christ, whose voice is Christianity, addresses himself first to the individual conscience; in-

dulges in no dreams of a renovated world without, till he has flung his appeal to the man within; looks *there* for the creative and vital forces which are to make all things new. He speaks to his hearers, not as to passive creatures who might look about them for some position in which it might befall them to be good, but as to beings conscious of internal power to strive and win the excellence they love; to grapple athletically with the oppositions of circumstance; and run the appointed race, though with panting breast and bleeding feet.

MARCH 5

The age has been prolific (like many of its predecessors) in inventions and proposed social arrangements, by which we may sit still and be made into the right kind of men; which will render duty the smoothest thing on earth, by warning all interfering motives off the spot, and turn the Christian race into a stroll upon a mossy lawn. The trust and boast of our period is not in its individual energy and virtue, not in its great and good minds, but in its external civilization, in schemes of social and political improvement, in things to be done *for* us, rather than *by* us; in what we are to *get*, more than in what we are to *be*.

MARCH 6

Feeble minds, in apology for their puny growth or premature decay in excellence, complain of the climate in which God has planted them; but where there is any vigor of life, the good seed will not wait to burst till it be removed to some sunny slope or luxuriant garden of the Lord: give it but a lodgment on the rock, and feed it with the melting snow, and it will start a forest on the hills, climbing with giant feet, fast as the seasons can make steps. The souls that would really be richer in duty in some new position, are precisely those who borrow no excuses from the old one; who even esteem it full of privileges, plenteous in occasions of good, frequent in divine appeals, which they chide their graceless and unloving temper for not heeding more.

MARCH 7

Wretched and barren is the discontent that quarrels with its tools instead of with its skill; and, by criticising Providence, manages to keep up complacency with self. How gentle should we be, if we were not provoked; how pious, if we were not busy; the sick would be patient, only he is not in health; the obscure would do great things, only he is not conspicuous!

March 8

Pleasant is it to entertain the picture of ourselves in some future scene, planning wisely, feeling nobly, and executing with holy triumph of the will; but 'tis a different thing, — not in the green avenues of the future, but in the hot dust of the present moment, — not in the dramatic positions of the fancy, but in the plain prosaic *now*, — to do the duty that waits and wants us, and put forth an instant and reverential hand to the noon-day or the evening task. Without great effort was nothing worthy ever achieved; and he who is never conscious of any strong lift within the mind may know that he is a cumberer of the ground.

March 9

It is quite true that self-cure is of all things the most arduous; but that which is impossible *to the man within us*, may be altogether possible *to the God.*

March 10

Deterioration of mind is indeed always gradual; recovery usually sudden; for God, by a mystery of mercy, has established this distinction in our secret nature, — that while we cannot, by one

dark plunge, sympathize with guilt far beneath us, but gaze at it with recoil till intermediate shades have rendered the degradation tolerable, — we are yet capable of sympathizing with moral excellence and beauty infinitely above us; so that while the debased may shudder and sicken at even the true picture of themselves, they can feel the silent majesty of self-denying and disinterested duty.

MARCH 11

The kingdom of God *is* within us. In the latency of every soul there lurks, among the things it loves and venerates, some earnest and salient point, whence a divine life may be begun and radiate.

MARCH 12

A new and regenerative affection, wherever it finds root, springs up (like a kingdom of God within us), "not with observation," but silently and unconsciously; from suggestions seemingly slight or even untraceable; with power often sudden and triumphant; in a seat within the soul profound and central; whence a transforming force radiates over the whole character to its very form and visible expression.

March 13

There is a wisdom of the understanding, arising from *foresight*, which demands policy; there is a higher wisdom of the soul, derived from *insight*, which dispenses with it. To discern "that which is before and after," has been pronounced the great *human* prerogative: but to see clearly that which is *within*, is the *divine*.

March 14

Had the soul of Christ been different, in vain would all external endowments of verbal truth and physical omnipotence have been accumulated on him. It was that spirit within, — the impersonation of heavenly love and light, — that retained around him by unconscious attraction the little band of simple men to whom it was "the Father's good pleasure to give" this "kingdom" — this transcendent dominion over the human heart.

March 15

Before the holiness of Christ, which was and is the supreme energy of the gospel, the craft of hierarchies, and the force of governments, and the inertia of a massive civilization, gave way. And while thousands of state-projects on the vastest scale have been conceived, executed, and for-

gotten; while on the field of history the repeated tramp of armies has been heard to approach, to pass by, to die away; while the noise of shifting nations, and the shriek of revolutions, have gone up from earth to heaven, and left silence once more behind, — this meek power triumphs over all; speaking with a persuasion which no vicissitudes of language can render obsolete, and throughout the ever-varying abodes of humanity singing its sweet songs to our heavy hearts.

MARCH 16

Nothing surely can be further from the spirit of Jesus than to measure excellence by the magnitude of its effects, rather than the purity of its principle: else he would never have ranked the widow's mite above the vast donatives of vanity; or have praised the profuse affection of the penitent that lavished on him costly offerings, esteeming them yet less precious than the consecrating tribute of her tears. Here, it was not the deed whose usefulness gave worth to the disposition, but the disposition whose excellence gave value to the deed. And this is everywhere the character of Christianity. It plants us directly beneath an eye that looketh at the heart: it forgives, in that we "have loved much": it throws away without compunction the largest

husk of ceremony, and treasures up the smallest seed of life: instead of sharpening us for casuistry, it prostrates us in worship; reveals to us our inner nature, by bringing us in contact with God who is a spirit, and to whom we bear the likeness of child to parent; gives us an intermediate image of him and of ourselves, Christ the meek and merciful, whose life was a prolonged expression of disinterestedness and love; and imposes, as the sole condition of discipleship, "faith in him," — implicit trust, that is, in the spirit of his mind; — self-precipitation upon a piety and fidelity like his, without concession to expediency, without faltering in danger, without flight from suffering, without slackened step, though duty should conduct us straight into the arms of ignominy and death.

March 17

Christianity sends each faculty of our nature to its proper office; our veneration, to Christ; our wills, to their duty.

March 18

It was not by retiring into himself, but by going out of himself, that Christ overcame the world; not by spiritual pathology and self-torture, but by veritable "sufferings," that he "became

perfect"; not by measuring his own emotions, but by oblivion of them amid a crowd of toils, a succession of fulfilled resolves, a profuse expenditure of life and effort having others for their object, that he rose above the dignity of men, and ripened the divinest spirit for the skies.

March 19

It is surprising how practical duty enriches the fancy and the heart, and action clears and deepens the affections. Like the run into the green fields and morning air to the fevered limbs and tightened brow of the night-student, it circulates a stream of unspeakable refreshment, "and renews our strength as the eagle's."

March 20

Indeed, no one can have a true idea of right, until he does it; any genuine reverence for it, till he has done it often and with cost; any peace ineffable in it, till he does it always and with alacrity.

March 21

There is a connection profound and beautiful between the affectionate and the self-denying character of Christianity. The voluntary sacrifices feed the involuntary sympathies of virtue:

and he that will daily *suffer* for his duty, nor lay his head to rest till he has renounced some ease, embraced some hardship, in the service of others and of God, shall replenish the fountains of his holiest life; and shall find his soul not settling into the flat and stagnant marsh, but flowing under the most delicious light of heaven above, over the gladdest fields of Providence below.

MARCH 22

So needful is sacrifice to the health and hardihood of conscience, that if the occasions for it do not present themselves spontaneously in our lot, we must create them for ourselves: not reserving to ourselves those exercises of virtue which are constitutionally pleasant, but, on the contrary, esteeming the asperity of a duty as the reason why we should put our hand to it at once; not acquiescing in the facility of wisely-adjusted habits, but accepting the ease of living well as the peremptory summons of God to live better. He, in short, is no true soldier of the Lord, nor worthy to bear the Christian armor, who, in service so high, will not make an hour's forced march of duty every day.

MARCH 23

Beneficence is the true school of benevolence.

We are not to wait till some descending spirit, uninvoked and unearned, enters us and makes the labor of sympathy delightful; but to go and do the deed of mercy, though it be with reluctant step, with dry and parched spirit, and without the grace of a free charity. Perhaps we may return with more genial mind and liberated affections: and, if *not*, we must the sooner and the oftener do the act of blessing again, though it be amid self-rebuke and shame, and recoil with no peace upon the soul. He that with patience will become the almoner of God to the poor and sad, and ask no portion of the blessing for himself, shall catch the spirit of the divine love at length: those whom he steadfastly benefits he will rejoice in at the end.

MARCH 24

The merely worldly man, interred amid mean cares, doubts the majestic truths of religion, simply from their sublimity and vastness, which render them incommensurable with his poor fraction of a mind: let him go and do a few noble deeds, and elevate the proportions of his nature, and it is wonderful what mighty things seem to become possible: Deity is near and even present at once, and immortality not improbable.

MARCH 25

No material interests, no common welfare, can so bind a community together, and make it strong of heart, as a history of rights maintained, and virtues uncorrupted, and freedom won: and one legend of conscience is worth more to a country than hidden gold and fertile plains. It is but an extension of the same influence that we discern in the Christian theory of life: only that it opens out our time-view alike in the future and the past. It makes both our lineage and our destiny divine; proclaims us *sons* of God, and *heirs*. No tie can so fasten on us the feeling that we belong not to the present, and that we degrade our nature whenever we live for the passing moment only; that we are not our own, but the great Father God's.

MARCH 26

Our lot is greater than ourselves, and gives to our souls a worth they would not else have dared to claim. Hence the humbleness there always is in Christian dignity. The immortal lot infinitely transcends our poor deserts: how we are to grow into the proportions of so high a life, it is wonderful to think. And yet, though it be above us always,— nay, even *because* it is above us, — there is something in it true and answering to our nature still: so that, having once lived with it, we

are only half ourselves — and that the meaner half — without it. The infinite burden of duty which good hearts are constrained to bear, is tolerable only to an immortal's strength.

MARCH 27

The Christian hope gives peace and power by restoring the broken proportions of the mind; and tranquillizes the restlessness of a spirit unconsciously "cabined, cribbed, confined." It is this truthfulness to our best and deepest nature, — the power we receive from it, the quiet we find in it, — that gives to the Christian estimate of life its most irresistible persuasion upon the heart.

MARCH 28

To live, in short, consists not in enjoying the day and forgetting in the night; but in a waking conscience, a self-forgetful heart, an ungrudging hand, a thought ever earnest for the truth; in a perpetual outlook of hope from our lower point upon an upper and infinite glory.

MARCH 29

We, too, like our great leader, must be made perfect through suffering; but the struggle by night will bring the calmness of the morning; the hour of exceeding sorrow will prepare the day

of godlike strength; the prayer for deliverance calls down the power of endurance. And while to the reluctant their cross is too heavy to be borne, it grows light to the heart of willing trust. The faithful heirs of "the Man of sorrows," transcending the trials they cannot decline, may quit the world with the cry, "It is finished," and pass through the silence of death to the peace of God.

MARCH 30

Great and sacred is obedience: he who is not able, in the highest majesty of manhood, to obey, with clear and open brow, a Law higher than himself, is barren of all faith and love; and tightens his chains, moreover, in struggling to be free. A childlike trust of heart, that can take a hand, and wondering walk in paths unknown and strange, is the prime requisite of all religion. Let the Great Shepherd lead; and by winding ways, not without green pastures and still waters, we shall climb insensibly, and reach the tops of the everlasting hills, where the winds are cool and the sight is glorious.

MARCH 31

To work patiently in faith and love, to do not what we like, but what we revere, confers not liberty only but power. He at least who, of all

our race, was the most indubitably free, and the great emancipator too, had in him this attribute, that "he pleased not himself," and esteemed it his mission "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And therefore did he obtain a name above every name, and put the world beneath his feet. Having claimed nothing, not even himself, it is given him to inherit all things. His power indeed over men was slow in gathering, and they that loved him in his mortal life, and lived and suffered for his sake, were few. Had he needed *then* a rescue and a retinue, he must have looked to the "legions of angels" who alone were qualified for a reverence and fidelity so true. But *now* let him come; and would not the legions of our world throng forth to meet him; casting the will of pride beneath his feet, strewing his path with flowers of joy which he has caused to bloom, and flinging their glad hosannas to the sky!

A Martineau Year Book

:: APRIL ::

APRIL 1

FATHER of spirits, that lovest whom thou chastenest! correct us in our weakness as children of men, that we may love thee in our strength as sons of God. May the same mind be in us that was also in Christ Jesus, that we may never shrink, when our hour comes, from drinking of the cup that he drank of. Wake in us a soul to obey thee, not with the weariness of servile spirits, but with the alacrity of the holy angels. Fill us with a contempt for evil pleasures and unfaithful ease; and sustain us in the strictness of a devoted life. Daily may we crucify every selfish affection, and delight to bear one another's burdens, to uphold each other's faith and charity, being tender hearted and forgiving as we hope to be forgiven. Hold us to the true humility of the soul that has not yet attained; and may we be moderate in our desires, diligent in our trust, and content with the disposals of thy Providence.

Lord of life and death! Thy counsels are se-

cret: thy wisdom is infinite. We know not what a day may bring forth. When our hour arrives, and the veil between the worlds begins to be lifted, may we freely trust ourselves to thee and say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

April 2

Whoever can so look into my heart as to tell *whether there is anything which I revere:* and, if there be, *what thing* it is; he may read me through and through, and there is no darkness wherein I may hide myself. This is the master-key to the whole moral nature; what does a man secretly admire and worship? What haunts him with the deepest wonder? What fills him with most earnest aspiration? What should we overhear in the soliloquies of his unguarded mind? This it is which, in the truth of things, constitutes his *religion;* — this, which determines his precise place in the scale of spiritual ranks; — this, which allies him to Hell or Heaven; — this, which makes him the outcast or the accepted of the moral affections of the Holiest. Every man's *highest,* nameless though it be, is his "*living God.*"

April 3

God, being infinite, can never be fully comprehended by our minds: whatever thought of him

be there his real nature must still transcend: there will yet be deep after deep beyond, within that light ineffable; and what we see, compared with what we do not see, will be as the raindrop to the firmament.

April 4

Standing before a God, of whose *Mind* the universe, of whose *Spirit* the Man of Nazareth, is the accepted symbol, we must become, in proportion to the sincerity and depth of our devotion, transfigured with the divinest glory of reason and affection that can rest upon a nature like ours; and, raised to a comprehension of that "love of Christ which passeth knowledge," our souls must not only attain a fairer proportion, but expand also to nobler dimensions, as they become "filled with the fullness of God."

April 5

No age, since the Reformation, has been so marked by idol-worship as our own; — so prolific of favorite and one-sided schemes of social improvement, founded on the sense of some solitary want of human nature, but barren of good from neglect of all the rest. Our Christianity is no longer *catholic*, rich in provisions for the whole faculties and being of man. With the expansion

and complication of our life, religion has lost its comprehensive grasp of all the elements of our well-being, and permitted them to escape and break up in mischievous analysis, and consign themselves to separate trusts. In answer to the earnest cry of society, "What shall we do to be saved from all our miseries and sins?" there are countless fragmentary answers, in place of the deep full harmony of response from the soul of Christian inspiration.

April 6

Christian faith, in aiming at once at the highest elements of good, necessarily includes the lowest; it contains within itself an epitome of all the parts of human perfection; and in the heart of a nation, as of a man, it is the grand source of moral salubrity and inextinguishable hope.

April 7

Perishable deeds and transient emotions are the materials God has given us wherewith to build up the eternal character; and to raise the tower by which we escape the floods of death, and, with no impious intent, climb the mansions of the skies. Steadily must the structure rise, like the walls of the persecuted Jerusalem of old, at which some toiled while others watched. Ye must build,

over the valley and on the rock, till a wall of impregnable protection is thrown around the sanctuary within, and in securest peace ye can go in and out the temple of God's spirit; —"which temple ye are."

April 8

The pains we spend upon our mortal selves will perish with ourselves; but the care we give out of a good heart to others, the efforts of disinterested duty, the deeds and thoughts of pure affection, are never lost: they are liable to no waste; and are like a force that propagates itself forever, changing its place but not losing its intensity. In short, there is a sense in which *nothing human ever perishes:* nothing, at least, which proceeds from the higher and characteristic part of a man's nature; nothing which comes of his mind and conscience; nothing which he does as a subject of God's moral law. His good and ill live after him, an endless blessing or a lasting curse; a consideration this which gives dignity to the humblest duty, and enormity to careless wrong.

April 9

Religion is not the matter of life that you can spread it out and show it, but the spirit of life that makes it different from mechanism and death:

it is not the poem's rhyme and stanzas that you may count and scan, but the soul of beauty that makes it music, and the pulse of thought that makes it throb. It can be understood only by sympathy from the heart outwards, not by induction from the appearances inwards. Though the most powerful commander of action, and the most productive agency in history, it is not defined by what it does: it is a mood, an attitude of soul towards God that alters the whole aspect of the universe, and affixes quite different and deeper meanings to all its symbols.

April 10

Let the mind fairly emancipate itself from that debasing valuation of a human being which the mere sentiments of property would dictate; — trust itself, with high faith, to the equalizing spirit of Christian piety and hope; and in paying, to all, the reverence due to an immortal, it will attain to the freedom and power of a divine love: it will speak to sorrow with the voice of another Christ, and restore his holiest miracles of mercy. Who can doubt that, were his spirit here, the work of good need not despair?

April 11

You cannot mechanize benevolence: you cannot

put Christian love into an act of Parliament or a subscription-list: and however necessary may be the remedial action of laws and institutions, on account of the comprehensive scale of their operation, the ties between man and man can be drawn closer only by personal agency.

April 12

Not one new sympathy can arise but by the contact between mind and mind: in the spiritual world life is born only of life: nor is any abrogation possible of that law of God which requires that we *seek* whatever we would *save*. The good comfort which with willing soul we tender to each other is of all things most precious to the heart.

April 13

Jesus himself spake much, before his crucifixion, of his reunion with his disciples. It was his favorite topic throughout that parting night; — the subject, now of promise, now of prayer; — the vision from which, in that hour of anguish, he could never, for many moments, bear to part. He leaves the impression that it would be very speedy; and so thought the apostles ever after. And as to place, his expressions fluctuate somewhat between *here* and *there;* though his hearers thenceforth looked, and looked in vain, for him to

come back to be with them. But of what concern was this? For, were they not ready to meet him, be it where it might? Did not that hope keep alive within their hearts the divine and gracious image of their Lord, and, at the end of forty years of various toil, still evoke it, beaming and breathing as though it were of yesterday?

April 14

Worlds above and worlds below; — mansions are they all of the great Father's house: and the disciples' greeting would be equally blessed, whether the immortal Galilean descended to the embrace on this vestibule of finite things; or summoned them rather across its threshold into the Presence-chamber of the Infinite. And no less indifferent to our affections are the localities beyond the grave. Having faith that the lost will assuredly be found, our souls detain them lovingly in the domestic circle still, and own one family in heaven and on earth. We may cease to ask, in *which* of the provinces of God may be the city of the dead; a guide will be sent, when we are called to go.

April 15

Come where and when it may, after years or ages, in the nearest or the furthest regions of

God's universe, it passes across our minds the vision of reunion: it opens a niche in the crypt of the affections, where the images of household memory may stand, and gaze with placid look at the homage of our sorrow, till they light up again with life, and fall into our arms once more. It matters little at what point in the perspective of the future the separation enforced by death is thought to cease. Faith and Love are careless time-keepers: they have a wide and liberal eye for distance and duration: and while they can whisper to each other the words "Meet again," they can watch and toil with wondrous patience, with spirit fresh and true, and, amid its most grievous loneliness, unbereft of one good sympathy.

April 16

Once let the Christian promise be taken to the heart; and as we walk through the solemn forest of our existence, every leaf of love that falls, while it proclaims the winter near, lets in another patch of God's sunshine, to paint the glade beneath our feet, and give "a glory to the grass." Tell me that I shall stand face to face with the sainted dead; and, whenever it may be, shall I not desire to be ready, and to meet them with clear eye and spirit unabashed? Shall I not feel,

that to forget them were a mark of a nature base and infidel? — that under whatever pleasant shelter I may rest, and over whatever wastes I may wander as a wayfarer in life, I must bear their image next my heart; — like the exile of old, flying with his household gods hidden in his mantle's secret folds?

April 17

What difference did it make to Christ, whether in the wilderness he did fierce battle with temptation; or sat on the green slope to teach the people, and send them home as if God had dropped upon their hearts amid the shades of evening: whether he stood over the corpse, and looking on the dark eyes, said, "Let there be light," and the curtain of the shadow of death drew up; or saw the angel of duty approach himself in the dress of the grave, and on the mournful whisper, "Come away," tendered his hand and was meekly led: whether his walk was over strewn flowers, or beneath the cross too heavy to be borne; — amid the cries of "Hosanna," or the murderous shout? The difference was all of pain; — none was there of conscience, of trust, of power, of love.

April 18

Let there be a conscious affiliation with God;

and as he pervadeth all things, a unity is imparted to life, and a stability to the mind, which put not happiness indeed, but character and will, above the reach of circumstance: a current of pure and strong affections, fed by the fount of bliss, pours from hidden and sunlit heights, and winds through the open plains and dark ravines of life, till its murmurs fall into the everlasting deep.

April 19

For, as the memory of bereaved affection is grief, so is its hope the restorer of peace: from the past is forced on us the sense of loss; from the future rises the expectation of recovery: in traversing the past, our thoughts glide along a procession of dear events arrested by a tomb; in conceiving of the future, they behold the same events opening into renewed being, and spreading themselves in all blessed varieties along the vistas of interminable life: the sadnesses of each successive point of remembrance are reversed, its losses regathered; its tears, as it were, unwept before the smile of God; its plaints unsung amid the harmonies of heaven; its sins untwined by the wounding yet healing hand of an angel penitence. Invoke the spirit of this trust; and though sorrow may not dry its tears, it rises to a dignity above despair.

April 20

Nature, as the mere mother of us all, takes small account, in this thronged and historic world, of the single human life; repeating it so often as to render it cheap; short as it is, often cutting its brief thread; and making each one look so like the other, that you would say it could not matter who should go. But will our private Love, which surely has the nearer insight, accept this estimate? Do we, when its treasure has fallen from our arms, say, of the term of human years, "It has been enough"? — that the possibilities are spent? that the cycle of the soul is complete; and that with larger time and renovated opportunity, it could learn, and love, and serve no more?

April 21

Ah no! to deep and reverent affection there is an aspect under which Death must ever appear unnatural; and its cloud, after lingering awhile till the perishable elements are hid, grows transparent as we gaze, and half shows, half veils, a glorious image in the depth beyond. Tell me not that affection is blind, and magnifies its object in the dark. Affection blind! I say there is nothing else that can see; that can find its way through the windings of the soul it loves, and know how its graces lie.

April 22

The theory which crowds this life with trials, and the other with rewards, which brightens the future only by blackening the present, which supposes that the only proper office of our residence here is to keep up one prolonged meditation on the hereafter, is a mere burlesque of Nature and the gospel. Futurity is not to mar, but to mend, our activity; and earth is not given that we may win the reversion of heaven, so much as heaven revealed to ennoble our tenure of earth. I know of no peculiar preparation for immortality beyond the faithful performance of the best functions of mortal life.

April 23

How often, in the stifling heat and press of life, when trivial cares rise with dry and dusty cloud to shut us in, do we wholly lose our place in the great calm of God, and fret as if there were no Infinite Reason embracing the vortex of the world! In loneliness and exhaustion, when the spirits are weak, and the crush of circumstances is strong; — when comrades rest and sleep, and we must toil and watch; — when the love of friends grows cold, and the warm light of youth is quenched, and the promises of years seem broken, and hope has but one chapter more; —

how little do we think, as the boughs drip sadly with all this night-rain, that we lodge in Eden still, where the voice of the Lord God rustles in the trees, and bespeaks the blossom and the fruit that can only spring from tears!

April 24

With the happy, it is their constant peace that seems to come by nature, and to be blunted by its commonness, — and their griefs to come from God, sharpened by their sacred origin: with the sufferer, it is his pain that appears to be a thing of course, and to require no explanation, while his relief is reverently welcomed as a divine interposition, and, as a breath of heaven, caresses the heart into melodies of praise.

April 25

When the great Father, in his everlasting watch, paces his daily and nightly rounds, and through these lower mansions of his house gathers in the offered desires of his children, *where*, think you, does he hear the tones of deepest love, and see on the uplifted face the light of most heartfelt gratitude? Not where his gifts are most profuse, but where they seem most meager; not where the suppliant's worship glides forth

from the cushion of luxury, through lips satiated with plenty, and rounded by health; not within the halls of successful ambition, or even the dwellings of unbroken domestic peace; but where the outcast, flying from persecution, kneels in the evening upon the rock whereon he sleeps; at the fresh grave, where, as the earth is opened, Heaven in answer opens too; by the pillow of the wasted sufferer, where the sunken eye, denied sleep, converses with a silent star, and the hollow voice enumerates in low prayer the scanty list of comforts, and shortened tale of hopes.

April 26

Genial, almost to miracle, is the soil of sorrow; wherein the smallest seed of love, timely falling, becometh a tree, in whose foliage the birds of blessed song lodge and sing unceasingly.

April 27

The doubts of God's goodness, whence are they? Rarely from the weary and overburdened, from those broken in the practical service of grief and toil; but from theoretic students at ease in their closets of meditation, treated themselves most gently by that legislation of the universe which they criticise with a melancholy so profound.

April 28

The universe, open to the eye to-day, looks as it did a thousand years ago: and the morning hymn of Milton does but tell the beauty with which our own familiar sun dressed the earliest fields and gardens of the world. We see what all our fathers saw. And if we cannot find God in your house and mine, upon the roadside or the margin of the sea; in the bursting seed or opening flower; in the day-duty and the night-musing; in the genial laugh and the secret grief; in the possession of life, ever entering afresh, and solemnly passing by and dropping off; I do not think we should discern him any more on the grass of Eden, or beneath the moonlight of Gethsemane.

April 29

Depend upon it, it is not the want of greater miracles, but of the soul to perceive such as are allowed us still, that makes us push all the sanctities into the far spaces we cannot reach. The devout feel that wherever God's hand is, *there* is miracle: and it is simply an indevoutness which imagines that only where miracle is, can there be the real hand of God.

April 30

The customs of heaven ought surely to be more

sacred in our eyes than its anomalies; the dear old ways, of which the Most High is never tired, than the strange things which he does not love well enough ever to repeat. And he who will but discern beneath the sun, as he rises any morning, the supporting finger of the Almighty, may recover the sweet and reverent surprise with which Adam gazed on the first dawn in Paradise. It is no outward change, no shifting in time or place, but only the loving meditation of the pure in heart that can re-awaken the Eternal from the sleep within our souls; that can render him a reality again, and vindicate for him once more his ancient Name of "THE LIVING GOD."

A Martineau Year Book

:: MAY ::

MAY 1

O THOU HOLIEST, whose Spirit bloweth where it listeth! heedless as we are, pass us not by in our unfaithfulness, but speak to us in thy still voice; and as we cover our head and hear, may we hush our idle words, and lay low our guilty pride, and drop every burden of our hearts, that we may be open to thy renewing grace and moulded by thy consecrating will. Amid the outer turmoil of the world thou reservest for us an inner silence of the spirit, where thou wilt ever meet us and give us peace. May the labor of our hands never stop the prayer of our hearts. Cease not to call us to thy secret place: there send the sprinkling of thy dews upon our dry affections; and breathe thou abroad to loose every band of our contracted souls.

O Source of everlasting grace, who hast not left us without thy holy image in our humanity! fill us with the mind that was also in Christ Jesus, who thirsted only to do thy will and finish thy work, and declined no cup of sorrow from

thy hand. Fix our eye upon the shadow of the cross which he has left upon every human path, and make us one with him in patience, in pureness, in love, in trust, in divine forgiveness, in entire self-sacrifice. Dying with him to earthly thralldom and mortal fears, may we rise with him to heavenly life and set our affections on things above. Touch us, whilst here, with quickening sympathies, joining us to thy saints and servants of every age; and mingle us, at length, with a more joyful communion, where sin and death shall be no more.

Hear us, O Lord! and let our prayer come before thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the morning sacrifice. And send us thine answer of peace, uniting us in the bonds of love with one another and with thee.

MAY 2

We sigh for a conscious *union with God*, which is far from being implied in mere *obedience* to him; nay, which is excluded till obedience gives place to a freer and less reluctant harmony with him.

MAY 3

What but our own low ideal is to hinder the moulding of our defective and broken humanity

into more Christ-like completeness? Shall we never rise to an inflexible moral enthusiasm, untainted by personal passion; to an indignation at wrong, kindled only by reverence for the right, and made persuasive by sympathy with the wronged; to a transparent simplicity unspoiled by the deepest insight and the largest intellectual view; to the fusion of quick affections with unconquerable will; to a passion for beauty so loving as to labor in the midst of deformity; to such inward union with the Highest as shall brace the soul to undismayed compassion for the lowest?

MAY 4

To have neither restlessness nor apathy, but pass freely between energy and repose, at the call to act or the need to suffer; to bind the wounds without indulgence to the sins of men; to have no tears but those of pity, — to utter no reproach but as the true interpreter of conscience, — to send forth no cry that does not soften into prayer; to mingle with the beauty of the world, yet find it but the symbol of a more transcendent glory; — only brings us somewhat nearer to that marvelous life in which the contradictions of thought and the conflicts of feeling formed the very harmony of a nature lifted into perfect peace.

MAY 5

The great secret of all peace lies in the ascendency of some strong love. Love, — the admiring or reverent direction of the heart on some object, — is the positive power of our life; and on its free action, on its due match against the problems it undertakes, depend the tranquillity and unity of existence.

MAY 6

Nothing so cheap as the intelligence which suffices to contradict and the conscientiousness which prompts to object: but the heart-wisdom that can light us on our way by the luster of sweet and earnest affection, the holy zeal that can melt our doubts away and make our duty a march of common joy instead of a skirmish of individual scruples, are little less than obsolete.

MAY 7

In the absence of anything of nobler scope, limited loves, particular enthusiasms, mere fancies of the mind, be they only innocent, are a great good; breaking the threads of detaining hesitations, and in one direction at least delivering the heart from contempt. The active votary of any harmless object is better than the passive

critic of all; and the dullest man who lives only to collect shells or coins is worthier than the shrewdest who lives only to laugh at him.

MAY 8

In these days it is a wiser and more difficult skill in education to preserve the enthusiasms of nature, than to regulate them by the artifices of reason; to save the moral admirations from false shame at their own earnestness than to restrain them from rash excess. Let the fresh dew lie undisturbed upon the young child's soul: only by drinking it eagerly in during the early hours can it bear the noonday heats and lend an unwithered smile to the evening shades.

MAY 9

Love is a good, not on its own account, but on account of the excellence to which it clings; not because it sets the heart at one with *something*, but with something noble, true, and holy. Nobleness, truth, and holiness must therefore be higher than affection, being that to which it ought to spring. Where they are not made supreme and paramount, wherever love stays with mixed and lower objects and intercepts the clear view of these, wherever it learns to be satisfied with its tenderness and heedless of its purity, not only is

its influence tainted, but its peace is spoiled by utter instability.

MAY 10

A heart entirely surrendered to its human and earthly relations, without throwing around them the hallowed atmosphere of faith, is indeed redeemed from the dry pining of a bark-bound and unmellowed nature; but has no security from the sorrows and sins of impulse, no shelter from the storms of tumultuous anguish. The domestic love which is a mere enlargement of instinct, without moral appreciation, without reverence, providing the tender care, but unconscious of a holy trust, is detained with the earthly form, and never catches the heavenly spirit, of its lot. For want of a supporting reverence, the truest affection loses its clearness and misses its proper end.

MAY 11

It is of all things the most melancholy to watch the moral clouding over of life's early dawn; to trace the dim veil stealing over the artless look; to notice how the earnest tone begins to leave the voice, and every worthy enthusiasm dies away into indifference; how it comes to be thought a fine thing to speak coolly of what is odious for its

vice, and critically of what is awful for its beauty. Where this spoiling takes place, I believe it is because we mingle no *reverence* with our affection, and accept without awe the solemn trust of a child's conscience.

MAY 12

Were there a deeper reality in our cares for religious training, we should feel committed to us a soul new as if born in Paradise, and should watch to see the divine features come out; should fear to quench any aspiration, to contradict any protest, to hurt any sacred instinct, of a spirit nearer perhaps to God than ours. Do you plead the necessity, urged for so many questionable things, of giving the youth betimes "a knowledge of the world"? Aye; but of *what* "world"? — for that is a large name, which covers several different things. Do you mean the crowd of contemporaries on the same level with himself, his equals or inferiors in principle and character, who by their tendencies and habits vote into existence the customs amid which he is to live? If so, you propose to bring him down to the average standard created by the mixed multitude of good and bad, to kill out every higher expostulation of the soul, and undo as he advances the hopeful work of earlier years.

MAY 13

A vehement temperament may no doubt be *externally* subdued by considerations of policy, or the discipline of good taste and intellect. But how paltry is this decent self-control, compared with the real internal calm when the Christ-like spirit has walked over the wild waters of the soul! No sublimer spectacle do I know on earth, than the faculties of a grand and passionate nature, as in a Socrates or a Paul, falling into stillness before the face of God, and by the awful light of his countenance turned from a stormy nobleness into a loving and working power. It is a spectacle which emerges painfully and rarely from the battle of the will, spontaneously and often from the repose of faith.

MAY 14

In temptations to unfaithfulness witnessed by no human eye, let us but say, "Ah! Lord, but thou art here!" and the failing purpose springs to its feet again. And under the encroachments of fretfulness or despondency from the frequent perverseness of men, what can so soon check the hasty thought, soothe the unquiet passion, and put a music of patience into the soul, as the look of that pure and loving eye from its depth of infinite calm?

MAY 15

"Peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." (John xiv. 27). This was a strange benediction to proceed from the Man of sorrows, at the dreariest moment of his life; — strange at least to those who look only to his outward career, his incessant contact with misery and sin, his absolute solitude of purpose, his lot stricken with sadness ever new from the temptation to the cross; but not strange perhaps to those who heard the deep and quiet tones in which this oracle of promise went forth, — the divinest music from the center of the darkest fate.

MAY 16

The peace of Christ was the fruit of combined *toil* and *trust;* in the one case diffusing itself from the center of his active life, in the other from that of his passive emotions; enabling him in the one case to *do things* tranquilly, in the other to *see things* tranquilly.

MAY 17

Two things only can make life go wrong and painfully with us; when we suffer or suspect misdirection and feebleness in the energies of love and duty within us, or in the Providence

of the world without us: bringing, in the one case, the lassitude of an unsatisfied and discordant nature; in the other, the melancholy of hopeless views. From these Christ delivers us by a summons to mingled toil and trust. And herein does his peace differ from that which "the world giveth,"—that its prime essential is not ease, but strife; not self-indulgence, but self-sacrifice; not acquiescence in evil for the sake of quiet, but conflict with it for the sake of God; not, in short, a prudent accommodation of the mind to the world, but a resolute subjugation of the world to the best conceptions of the mind.

MAY 18

The first impulse of "the natural man" is to seek peace by mending his external condition; to quiet desire by increase of ease, to banish anxiety by increase of wealth, to guard against hostility by making himself too strong for it; to build up his life into a fortress of security and a palace of comfort, where he may softly lie, though tempests beat and rain descends. The spirit of Christianity casts away at once this whole theory of peace; declares it the most chimerical of dreams; and proclaims it impossible ever to make this kind of reconciliation between the soul and the life wherein it acts. As well might the

athlete demand a victory without a foe. To the noblest faculties of soul, rest is disease and torture.

MAY 19

Attempt to make all smooth and pleasant without, and you thereby create the most corroding of anxieties, and stimulate the most insatiable of appetites within. But let there be harmony within, let no clamors of self drown the voice which is entitled to authority there, let us set forth on the mission of duty, resolved to live for it alone, to close with every resistance that obstructs it, and march through every peril that awaits it: and in the consciousness of immortal power, the sense of mortal ill will vanish; and the peace of God well-nigh extinguish the sufferings of the man. "In the world we may have tribulation; in Christ we shall have peace."

MAY 20

Children of God in the noblest sense, we are not without something of his creative spirit in our hearts. The power is there, to separate the light from the darkness within us, and set in the firmament of the soul luminaries to guide and gladden us, for seasons and for years; power to make the herbage green beneath our feet, and beckon happy creatures into existence around our

path; power to mould the clay of our earthly nature into the likeness of God most High; and thus only have we power to look back in peace upon our work, and find a sabbath-rest upon the thought, that, morning and evening, all is good.

MAY 21

Between these two sources of Christian peace, virtuous toil and holy trust, there is an intimate connection. The desponding are generally the indolent and useless; not the tried and struggling, but speculators at a distance from the scene of things, and far from destitute of comforts themselves. Barren of the most blessed of human sympathies, strangers to the light that best gladdens the heart of man, they are without the materials of a bright and hopeful faith. But he who consecrates himself sees at once how God may sanctify the world; he whose mind is rich in the memory of moral victories will not easily believe the world a scene of moral defeats; nor was it ever known that one who, like Paul, labored for the good of man, despaired of the benevolence of God.

MAY 22

Whoever would have the peace of Christ, let him seek first the spirit of Christ. Let him not

fret against the conditions which God assigns to his being, but reverently conform himself to them, and do and enjoy the good which they allow. Let him cast himself freely on the career to which the secret persuasion of duty points, without reservation of happiness or self; and in the exercise which its difficulties give to his understanding, its conflicts to his will, its humanities to his affections, he shall find that united action of his whole and best nature, that inward harmony, that moral order, which emancipates from the anxieties of self, and unconsciously yields the divinest repose. The shadows of darkest affliction cannot blot out the inner radiance of such a mind; the most tedious years move lightly and with briefest step across its history; for it is conscious of its immortality, and hastening to its heaven.

MAY 23

The great end, yet the great difficulty, of religion is, so to analyze our existence for us, as to distinguish its essential spirit from its casual forms, the real from the apparent, the transient from the eternal.

MAY 24

That which a man *has*, and that which he *is*,

move about together, and live in the same house; till our fancy and our faith grow too indolent to separate them; we fasten him to his possessions, and when they are dropped in death, think that he has gone to nought. It is the business of faith to see all things in their intrinsic value; it is the work of experience to thrust them on us in accidental combinations: and hence the flattering, sceptical, blinding influence of a passive and unresisted experience.

MAY 25

Our early years gaze on all things through the natural glass of beauty and affection, which in religion is the instrument of truth. But soon it gets dimmed by the breath of usage, which adheres to all except natures the most pure and fine: and a cold cloud darkens the whole universe before us. Day by day, the understanding sees more, the imagination less, in the scene around us; till it seems all made up of soil to grow our bread, and clay to build our house: and we become impatient, if any one pretends to find in it the depth which its atmosphere has lost to us, and the grandeur which has faded from our view.

MAY 26

We are often the last to see how noble are our

opportunities, to feel how inspiring the voices that call us to high duties and productive sacrifice: and while we loiter on in the track of drowsy habit, esteeming our lot common and profane, better hearts are looking on, burning within them to stand on the spot where we stand, to seize its hopes, and be true to all its sacredness.

MAY 27

The great use of custom is to teach us what to expect, to familiarize us with the order of events from day to day, that we may compute our way aright, and know how to rule whatever lies beneath our hand. This is the true school for the active, working will. But for the thoughtful, wondering affections, a higher discipline is needed; an excursion beyond the limits where the senses stop, into regions where usage, breathless and exhausted, drops behind; where the beaten ways of expectation disappear, and we must find the sun-path of faith and reason, or else be lost.

MAY 28

Religion strips the costume from the life that *is:* History restores the costume to the life that *was:* and by this double action we learn to feel sensibly, where the mere dress ends and the true

life begins; how much, thievish time may steal, and corroding age reduce to dross; and what treasure there is, which no thief approacheth or moth corrupteth. Those who are shut up in the present, either by involuntary ignorance, or by voluntary devotion to its immediate interests, contract a certain slowness of imagination, most fatal both to wisdom and to faith.

MAY 29

In proportion as we think well of our nature and of our kind; in proportion as we estimate worthily the task of Providence in ripening a world of souls; shall we be reconciled to the tardy and interrupted steps by which the work proceeds. We shall be content and trustful, though our personal portion of the work, and even the sum of our combined endeavors while we live, should be inconspicuously small.

MAY 30

For what purpose can any Christian say that he is here in life, with his divine intimation of what *ought to be*, and his sorrowing perception of what *is*, if not to put forth a perpetual endeavor against the downward gravitation of his own and others' nature? And if in the conquest of evil God can engage himself eternally,

is it not a small thing for us to yield up to the struggle our three-score years and ten? Whatever difficulties may baffle us, whatever defeat await us, it is our business to live with resistance in our will, and die with protest on our lips, and make our whole existence, not only in desire and prayer, but in resolve, in speech, in act, a remonstrance against whatever hurts and destroys in all the earth.

MAY 31

It is human, indeed, to desire some rich success; and each generation expects to gather and taste the produce of its own toil: but the seasons of God are eternal; he "giveth the increase," not for enjoyment only, but for reproduction; and ripens secretly, beneath the thick foliage of events, many a fruit of our moral tillage, for the sake of the little unnoticed seed, which, dropped on the soil of his Providence, shall spread over a future age the shelter of some tree of life. Be it ours in word to proclaim, in deed to make ready, the "acceptable year of the Lord."

A Martineau Year Book

:: JUNE ::

JUNE 1

O GOD, Thou art our God! early will we seek thee. Our soul thirsteth for thee, Thou Well of life, that springest up eternally! Apart from thee, wandering by our own desires, we never quit the dry and thirsty land, or find the secret refreshment of loving and submissive hearts. Only when we lay open all our weakness in thy solemn presence, and own our inmost sin to thy long-suffering, and renounce our vain reliances for the leadings of thy tender hand, do the clouds of delusion begin to break, and we see from afar the rest that remaineth for thy people. Never, O Thou Spirit of grace! let our sin and heedlessness gather thick upon us: but, day by day, may the way be more clear and the eye more pure for thy blessed light to come.

JUNE 2

O Thou to whom time and eternity are one! where our treasure is, there let our hearts be also. Set our affections on things above, where our

real life is hid with thee. Filled with the everlasting light, may we look on each other, and on our work below, and on the strife and sorrows of humanity, with a love and hope that are not of this world. In waiting for the blessed end, may we compose our hearts to a sweet and patient temper, befitting those who are redeemed from self-care by the love of God. Enlarge our souls with a divine charity, that, reviled, we may not revile again; that we may hope all things, believe all things, endure all things; and become messengers of thy healing mercy to the grievances and infirmities of men. In all things attune our hearts to the holiness and harmony of thy kingdom. And hasten the time when that kingdom shall come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

JUNE 3

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John xiv. 26.) Here then the message of an Apostle, nay, even the teaching of the Holy Spirit, is identified with sacred remembrance; remembrance of holy words and deep impressions dropped upon the heart in the highest moments

of life. The apprehension of divine things consists, it would seem, not in new discoveries, not in strained and labored thought, but in the reawakening of the pure and simple mind, and the gathering up of every Christ-like image and affection from behind and from within.

JUNE 4

Whatever it be that touches our spirit and takes the film away, — be it a sorrow that makes us weak and low, or the contact of some saintlier mind, or the flash of a prophet's word, or the music of a poet's strain, — it seems to speak to us as we are, to sink home into what was always there; — not so much to contribute what is foreign, as to reveal what is our own; — less to fetch in a light that is not native, than to take our darkening hindrances away. That our response is so quick and our shame so deep, shows us that it is not a new thought which is given, but an ancient affection which is struck; sleeping, it may be, but so full of waking possibilities that we seem to have known it, though not to have lived it, all before. Every conquering call to higher life comes to us by such "way of remembrance."

JUNE 5

If these things are so, if, in the very frame of

our nature and the constitution of the spiritual world, there is provision for drawing us to God; if, in addition to the outer manifestations of himself in every type of good up to his beloved Son, He himself abides with us in eternal watch; there is relief and hope for those who try to keep alive in each other's hearts the divine interpretation of human experience and duty. We, whose office it is to dispense as we can the Word of life, have but to bring to your remembrance things that are already there, mingled with the name of God. We have nothing to invent of our own, but only to take of his, and ask you to own it as also yours.

JUNE 6

If Christ never deemed himself nearer to Heaven than when in presence of the childlike heart, then the resources of a devout life cannot be remote and of difficult access, but so nigh unto us, that, if we miss them, it is from their close presence rather than their distance.

JUNE 7

The divine claims, which demand us for a common holiness, do not wait to be discovered by any strain of thought, any subtlety of intellect, but are pressed home upon us by the pleadings of a Living Advocate who will never be silent and

never remove. "Already taught of God," if we will but listen with a docile mind, we have only to retire to the last and inmost retreats of faith and love; and life will lose its weariness, affection its languor, and even death its grief. Be it ours, amid such memories of the Spirit, to find sanctity and peace!

JUNE 8

I know not how it is; but men do not seem to enter into this *living* sense of God, as the instant, everflowing sanctity of life, that bathes the hours of their own time, and passes across their own souls with the wave of regeneration. How the Apostolic Scriptures labor to express and quicken this consciousness! With what reality they speak of divine things in the present tense; and *that*, not as fetched into it by a paroxysm of miracle, but as continuous and never past! "In him we *live*, and *move*, and *have our being*"; "his Spirit beareth witness with our spirit"; and "helpeth our infirmities," the medium alike of their sorrowful cry and his soothing response: does "not leave us alone" and "comfortless," but "takes up his abode with us," and makes us "one with the Father and the Son." Has this language lost its meaning for us? Do we perversely credit it all to the first Christian age, and leave it em-

balmed there as the corpse of a bygone time? Do we set the all-consecrating Presence at an historic distance, and in a Holy Land, — anywhere but in the room where we dwell, the church where we pray, the task with which we strive?

JUNE 9

Where then is *our* God? What, think you, will he do ere the clock strikes twelve? Take me to his vestiges: find me his path of *life:* set me in the passing wind as he moves by. You say, He is *everywhere:* then show me *anywhere* that you have met him. You declare him *everlasting:* then tell me *any moment* that he has been with you. You believe him ready to succor them that are tempted, and to lift those that are bowed down: then in what passionate hour did you subside into his calm grace? in what sorrow lose yourself in his "more exceeding" joy? These are the testing questions by which we may learn, whether *we too* have raised our altar to an "unknown God," and pay the worship of the blind; or whether we commune with him "in whom we live and move and have our being."

JUNE 10

Every religion seeks for something that may

be *offered to God* and be acceptable to him, and may set the worshipers at one with him; and according as our offering is more or less an external thing do we find our place in one of three great classes that divide mankind. To give him something that we *have*, is *Heathen;* to offer him what we *do*, is *Jewish;* to surrender to him what we *are*, is *Christian.* "Take my goods and cease to be angry with my sin," was the cry of the first; "Accept my righteousness, and remember thy promise, for I have served thee," speaks the character of the second; "I am not my own, but thine, O Lord; live thou in me, or else I die," is the prayer of the third. To buy off displeasure by sacrifice; to deserve favor by obedience; to attain similitude and communion by loving self-abandonment; are the three aims that make the ascending scale of faith.

JUNE 11

If we listen to our self-love, we shall estimate our lot, less by what it is, than by what it is not; shall dwell on its hindrances, and be blind to its possibilities; and, comparing it only with imaginary lives, shall indulge in flattering dreams of what we should do, if we had but power, and give, if we had but wealth, and be, if we had no temptations.

JUNE 12

If we yield ourselves unto God and sincerely accept our lot as assigned by him, we shall count up its contents and disregard its omissions, and, be it as feeble as a cripple's and as narrow as a child's, shall find in it resources of good surpassing our best economy, and sacred claims that may keep awake our highest will. How many a prisoner of the sick-room, permitted to see life only through the window, and closing his eyes upon it in the midst of youth, has photographed on loving hearts an image of self-forgetfulness, of patient waiting, of bright affection, of rest in God, which has ever after presided, as a domestic saint over all the years! Nay, is it not shame for us who follow in the train of one despised and rejected of men, and who point to the cross as the symbol of sublimest power, to murmur at a burdened and afflicted lot, as denying us scope for righteousness?

JUNE 13

How trivial in magnitude are the widest differences of external condition, compared with the inward soul and its divine relations which belong to all! *Any* life which admits of duty, love, and trust, is infinitely more, upon its lowest terms, than all the increments of opportunity which cir-

cumstances can pile upon it; and those who yield themselves unto God well know how, in the sacred measures, the seeming inequalities disappear.

JUNE 14

The only life which is not worth living is not of God's giving, but of our own creation, the life of *no duty, no love, no trust;* which is indeed separated by an immeasurable interval from its opposite, and amounts to a spiritual suicide of our humanity. Nothing brings us nearer to the verge of this state than the nursing of selfish discontent. Nothing withdraws us further from it, than the childlike acceptance of our sphere as divinely limited, and divinely adequate.

JUNE 15

The hardness of our task, — the paradox of the Christian mind, — lies *here;* that we have to strive against the grievous things of life, while hope remains, as if they were evil; and then, when the stroke has fallen, to accept them from the hand of God, and doubt not they are good. But to the loving, trusting heart all things are possible; and even this instant change, from overstrained will to sorrowful repose, from fullest resistance to complete surrender, from hanging on the cross to folding it in close embrace upon the

breast as emblem of all that is divine, is realized without convulsion.

JUNE 16

In our lower moods of grief or disappointment, we ask too many questions and cannot rest: we go on continuously from our time of conflict to our time of loss, and the sea still heaves when the wild storm is hushed. We want to know more than the silent God deems it good to tell; to understand *the "Why"* which he bids us wait to ask; to *see* the path which he has spread on purpose in the dark.

JUNE 17

The infinite Father does not stand by us to be catechized, and explain himself to our vain mind: he is here for our trust; and if we will but lean on him, our chafing heart shall sleep the sweet sleep of recovery. We must not carry the habits and exactions of vision into the hours of its loss; if we do but take his hand, he will lead us as the blind by a way that we know not; and we cannot go astray while he abides.

JUNE 18

It was needful for the Christ to suffer, if he were to be the emblem of the *life of man* in its

most sacred form. Otherwise indeed his lot would not have been truly human, and would have attracted, not the fruitful sympathy, but the barren longings of struggling men.

JUNE 19

No one who has followed the steps of the prophet of Nazareth, and listened in thought to his voice of sad affection, and beheld him in his lonely watch by night with full and earnest eye upon the stars, and overheard the farewell converse when he bequeathed his peace, and seen how on Calvary even the cross could lose its power to impart disgrace, and rather received an everlasting glory, can longer feel amazed that one who was to elicit what is holy from our life, should be so deeply acquainted with grief.

JUNE 20

Since the evening of Gethsemane how many lips, in the composure of prayer, have cried "Not my will but thine be done"! to how many tortured hearts has the thought occurred, not without a pure content, "It is enough for the disciple to be as his master"! Has not the crucifix become for ages the symbol of grief divinely borne? has it not, generation after generation, been hid in the bosoms of thousands, sustaining the soul

of self-denial, and reminding them not to faint beneath the cross of life?

JUNE 21

It was in his parting sorrow that Jesus asked his disciples to remember him: and never was entreaty of affection answered so: for ever since has his name been breathed in morning and evening prayers that none can count; and has brought down some gift of sanctity and peace on the anguish of bereavement, and the remorse of sin. Herein is Christ's truest glory; and "ought he not therefore to have suffered these things, and entered into his glory?"

JUNE 22

It was needful for Christ to suffer, if he were to be the emblem of the *soul of man*, in its most sacred aspect. Human character is never found "to enter into its glory" except through the ordeal of affliction. Whatever is lofty and noble in life and history, whatever lifts us by some celestial attraction above the downward gravitation of self, it has been the function of suffering to create.

JUNE 23

Disappointed aspiration of *some kind*, desire stretching far beyond attainment in *some direc-*

tion, I do believe to be essential to the sentiment of religion: thus only can we be conscious how far the dimensions of our souls transcend the limits of our lot, and make us the children of the Infinite.

JUNE 24

It is always the greatness of the field, or the length of the duration, or the intricacy of the relations of physical laws, that renders their detection difficult and late. Moral and spiritual truth, on the other hand, is apt to evade us by its extreme nearness and simplicity. The inner facts and revelations of our own nature are too little removed from our center to be distinctly apprehended. The pity that stirs us we know not why, the admiration that burns in silence on the heart, the prayer of aspiration which no liturgy can express, the recoil from sin (like the spasm of the mountaineer in tainted air), are realities too close to us to be readily brought into appreciation.

JUNE 25

The outer coatings of our life, the occupation that involves us, the evidence we examine, the decision we pronounce, — it is easy to apprehend and criticise; but the nearer we approach to the inner kernel of our being, and retire from what

we *do* to what we *are*, and sink back into the very color of the soul, the more are we bathed in a beauty that lies hid, and lose ourselves in the good we seek.

JUNE 26

In proportion as God's Holy Spirit finds abode with us, do we know it to be beyond our criticism, and surrender to it without a question more: the eyelids inquisitively stiff droop with indrawn reverence: we claim nothing, we doubt nothing, we possess nothing, but are ourselves possessed by what alone has right over us to do with us as he will.

JUNE 27

In the pride and glory of life that dazzle so many thoughtless hearts, it is wholesome to remember how different are the actual proportions of things as discerned by him that is ever in the midst; how many of the first are really last, and of the last are first. Deep in the recesses of private life, shrinking from public ways, he sees many a noble purpose intensely working its silent way; or a hidden sorrow consuming its own smoke, and turning it to flame; or a sweet and self-denying patience, bearing the thorny cross

under the gay attire, and covering the plaintive hymn beneath the notes of joy.

JUNE 28

Life is deeper than it seems; and it may well check our petty cavils and censorious judgments to remember, that he who sees and loves according to the truth of things may have his place and dear abode in the inner mind of the very neighbor we criticise and the heretic we shun; may think nothing at all of the small matters we derisively apprehend, and gently love the greater ones we blindly overlook; and find not only many a precious thing concealed from us, but gracious affection and pure thought that do not even see themselves.

JUNE 29

Have you never known among your own friends, one whom you would completely misjudge, if you looked no farther than the outward ways and words through which he intentionally speaks; who lightly plays with the surface of experience, and elastically throws off its severer incidents; who is reticent of his own troubles and calm towards those of others, as if both were matters of course, to be quickly dismissed into the past

and cleared out of the way; but who, within this smooth and hard activity, hides quite another nature unsuspected by the common eye; a pathetic thought betrayed only in the flash of humor that tries to suppress it; a fire of enthusiasm which never reports itself as heat, but simply in the steadfast tension of a noble life; — a religious depth, unrevealed unless in the books he loves, and in the simple dignity of his presence?

JUNE 30

There is no human life so poor and small as not to hold many a divine possibility, — its "angel that always beholds the face of the Father who is in Heaven." And this is enough to make tenderness and reverence nearer to truth than any suggestion of suspicion or impulse of contempt.

A Martineau Year Book

:: JULY ::

JULY 1

UNTO Thee, O Source of life and strength, we lift our longing eyes again. Look on us in thy pity, Lord: shine upon us with thy grace: receive us into thine affection. What abiding stay have we in heaven or on earth but thee alone, who art and wast and art to come? To us belong the courses of ceaseless change: we come and go, we live and die, we pass through the light and darkness of this world; and it is not given to us to say "Here will we rest." But around thee, the Center of all, day and night, summer and winter, joy and sorrow, circle continually, and come not nigh to thee. Wert thou only great in thine infinitude, Most High! the world would be but vanity and our life as nothing before thee. But thy love also is infinite and deemeth nothing small which thou hast made: and our souls, created in thine image and visited by thy Spirit, thou callest to meet thee face to face.

JULY 2

Oh, with what glad thanks would we praise thee, Gracious Lord! did we not know that our thoughtless lives would contradict the song upon our lips! For we have rendered but a cold answer to thy free affection, and have abused our trust to the poor purposes of our own will. Thine awful presence we have forgot. Of thine everlasting law of duty we have made light. Thine immortal promise has but faintly shone upon our sorrows. And our feverish desires have scarcely felt the cool sprinkling from thy well of life. O Lord! how long shall we delude ourselves by the pressure of vain custom, and the flatteries of our idle hearts? Let the time past suffice to have wrought our own will, and now make us consecrate to thine. Whenever we grow eager for unworthy things or troubled about mean cares, turn on us that look of thine which shows us all our littleness and all thy deep compassion. Let thy Spirit be felt to hover near our souls: and beneath the air of its wing may every passion lie quiet, and all our better love spring up with hope and power. In care, in haste, in provocation, keep us ever even, ever still. In temptation, make us quick and clear and strong. Amid threats and evil opinion give us a prophet's heart to disregard the favor of men and simply heed the truth of

God. And in all our passage through this world of many sins and sorrows, fill us with Christ's own patient and helpful spirit, open to every holy affection, and always ready to comfort and forgive. Thus own us, Heavenly Father, as thy true children, and prepare us for thy more intimate presence.

JULY 3

Where there is no *direct intercourse* between the human mind and the Divine, no mutual recognition, no secret understanding, religion is no more than a tradition; God is no longer our dear abode, our native land, but as some distant country reported by foreign ships, or some invisible star testified by magnifiers of the skies.

JULY 4

However stifled by negligent practice or by false philosophy, the true instincts of the soul may yet assert themselves again: in the surprises of anguish or deep joy, they will break their seals and cry aloud once more, and prove that nature is too strong for any godless lie. The decline of human nature when withdrawn from God, its instant spring back to him under the woundings of affection, and the invariable consciousness of communion with him in the noblest and holiest men

of every age, ought at least to moderate the confidence of the sceptic, and induce him to ask whether his doubt of the power of prayer be a gift of sight or a visitation of blindness.

JULY 5

He that has once found "the secret place of the Most High," soon ceases to press, or indeed to trust, his own desires; and the more he is lifted into the freedom of the spirit, so much the less resists the necessity of the divine natural order. He is at home in both spheres; and is reconciled to each by the presence of the other. The fixed administration of God supplies to life its subduing and chastening element, its occasions of speechless submission and quiet awe. His free relation to the responsible soul opens the true field for devotion, the place of lonely audience, the living interchange, mind with mind, where the Infinite Father individualizes himself for us, takes up our sighs, and breathes himself into our affectionate will.

JULY 6

Religion is no more possible without prayer, than poetry without language, or music without atmosphere. In the dumb heart it invariably dies; and wherever it lives, it is in the habitual

faith that as we "give good gifts unto our children, much more will the heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him."

JULY 7

What is the real difference between the mind of the child and that of the disciples? May we not say that the former was empty of traditional theology, and open to learn anything at the dictate of reverence; the latter, full of traditional theology, and prevented from unlearning by the influence of sanctified ambition? And does not their Lord say that he will dispense with the theology for the sake of the fresh mind, rather than with the fresh mind for the sake of theology? Nay, is not the stripping-off of acquired conceptions, — the clearance of custom and tuition, — the simple return to the untraced heart, described by him as in itself a heavenly conversion? as if, when the texture were untwined to take the false pattern out, the first filaments we had bound by our artificial pains would be found to have a vital force, and if we killed them not, would grow into forms most fair.

JULY 8

With impunity God will not be disowned *anywhere.* He is in the old Scriptures of prophets

and apostles; he is also in the young child's heart; and if you will not bring the twofold voices of his Spirit into a harmony of love, but will urge the one to drown the other, you will but raise a discord or a sigh.

JULY 9

Religion is more than an artificial product of mental instruction: it is the prayer of conscience, the vaticination of reason, the natural faith of love; it is ever waiting to burst into consciousness and to spring upwards when occasion shall allow. It is a fire kindled on the altar, ere yet the sacrifice is found. And this is just the truth which Jesus sanctioned when he chose the heart of childhood as the most open seat of the kingdom of heaven; and told us that even while we teach to it our theology, we must relearn from it our religion. There best may we meet again the fresh and genuine reverence which quiets passion; the awe-struck heart on which ambition sleeps and dies; which never asks to be greatest, never fears to be least; which seeks no privilege but that of belonging unto God; which resigns every claim but that of loving the hand that holds it whether with the gentleness of shelter or the pressure of a wholesome severity; and dwells in life, like the

infant prophet in the temple, with the ever-listening will, thinking, though only with silent words, "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth thee."

JULY 10

Worship is the free offering of ourselves to God; ever renewed, because ever imperfect. It expresses the consciousness that we are his by right, yet have not duly passed into his hand; that the soul has no true rest but in him, yet has wandered in strange flights until her wing is tired. It is her effort to return home, the surrender again of her narrow self-will, her prayer to be merged in a life diviner than her own.

JULY 11

In Christian worship, through all its confessions of estrangement, there runs the undertone of near communion between the human spirit and the Divine. And if communion, then sympathy and resemblance too: for like only can commune with like: when eye meets eye and knows it, there is the same fire alive in both: when affection answers to affection, there is a common language of intelligence between them; and *something* in us there must be, — some possible love or thought or goodness, — akin to the Infinite Perfection and

flowing forth to meet it. *This* it is, — this best element of us,— which asserts its rights and struggles to its place in every expression of religion.

JULY 12

Devotion instinctively tries to lay down whatever separates from God, and to pass wholly into what unites with him. It takes its stand on the felt common ground, the points of meeting, between the human and the Divine.

JULY 13

From the type of their worship you may at once read off men's conceptions of God and their ideal of man. That which they exclude is to them the secular and undivine: that which they most reverently preserve is their medium of contact between heaven and earth. Their poorer or richer idea of the holy and perfect life is reflected in the character of their devotions, speaks to the eye in the aspect of their sanctuaries, and to the ear in the voice of their praise.

JULY 14

Christian worship takes its stand on the common ground of the human nature and the Divine. It banishes the trivial things that are only ours:

it foregoes the transcendent light that is only his: but at the middle distance, where the two may meet with the same love, the same thought, as medium of vision, there does devotion abide and rest. To ask then, whether the elements of beauty fitly enter into our worship of God, is to enquire in what part of our nature do we meet him? through what range of affections does the communion extend? and where, on the other hand, begins the veil of darkness that hinders mutual approach.

JULY 15

If the only problem of religion were that of personal security, if, having found the lowest terms of mercy, you will rest in these and aspire no further, I cannot say that God will reject any scrupulous fidelity, however cold and colorless it may be. He may *require* only this; but assuredly he *loves* a great deal more, and he *is* a great deal more, than this doctrine contemplates. For, was it not he that dwelt in Christ, and gleamed on us through the tender graces of his soul, and taught us in him how to do the moralities by transcending them with a holy love? And it is precisely on these higher affections, on inspirations that fold us in a light beyond our own, that

the spirit of beauty first steals into our modes of devotion to mediate between the soul and God.

JULY 16

Worship is the organ, not of self-possessed volition, but of self-oblivious enthusiasm; not of definite resolve, but of infinite aspiration; not of ethical circumspection, but of free escape into divine communion.

JULY 17

Didactic Art is a simple contradiction, like scientific lyrics or geometric elegies; and those who hold a mere rational and ethical Christianity, who put their trust in instruction and authority alone, have no natural entrance into a symbolic temple and a majestic worship. If a prophet cry, "Awake, awake; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem," they ask "What good is it? Will it signify to God? Will it not cost more than it is worth to men?"— never suspecting that human worship is no calculation of good at all, neither a propitiation of heaven nor a self-culture of the disciple's character; but the spontaneous rising of the soul to the Holiest of all, — the natural flow of her fretting grief and sin into that still deep, — the out-pouring of the awe, the hope,

the contrition, the inextinguishable trust, with which she clings to the affectionateness of God.

JULY 18

That God is a Spirit has not hindered him from shaping the vault of night and hanging it with stars; or from tinting the tender blue of day, save where it shrinks from the glory of the sun; or from spreading the sheet of sea and streaking it with green and gold; or from poising the summer clouds to fling the chase of purple shadows on the hills; or from shining through the cool light of the spring woods; or from dwelling in our humanity to touch it with many a grace and repeat in it the image of his pity and his truth, or from resting with the Man of sorrows as the symbol of his purity and holy love. These are the works of his creativeness, — the appeal of his beauty to our hearts, — the mighty poem he improvises through all the rhythm of the universe.

JULY 19

And if he speaks to us by type, by type alone can we reply. He is too great to give us all his thought: we are too small to command in return more than faint tracings of ours; and so, for opposite reasons and from opposite ends of the scale

of spirits, we meet midway in the endeavor to embody our living word, — the Infinite pressing into manifestation through the Finite; and the Finite struggling to represent the Infinite.

JULY 20

Ask me not the *use* of exhausting the resources of form and color and melody, merely to utter the unutterable; or else ask your Maker what is the use of the tear, the laugh, the clasped hands of supplication, or the returning exile's fall upon the neck to rest and sob. These things are not useful contrivances but natural language; and in proportion as God has been lavish of expression, and charges all things with inner meaning deeper than their outward use, should we more freely bring him our choicest as the medium of our aspirings.

JULY 21

The reserves of men differ far more widely than their external conduct and demeanor; and under the same appearances are concealed souls whose hidden realms lie apart in remotest latitudes. God is the unerring judge of us all, chiefly because he can read our silences; and though he calls us to account for "every idle word,"

he knows us better by the thing we *will not speak.*

JULY 22

To the mature there is a depth in life which the early season of sympathy cannot understand; and a variety in experience which only Omniscient affection can appreciate and touch with consolation and relief.

JULY 23

Where the stream of the soul is deep, however pure and translucent the waters may be, the bottom will be out of sight; and it is not the noisy sparkling current, everywhere seen through and through, but the river's gliding mass, ever silent in the middle and only whispering at its edge, that reminds you of the lofty source amid far-off mountain solitudes.

JULY 24

Doubtless a transparent mind, however shallow, prevents distrust; but he that suggests to you a hidden region of his soul, retiring before your eye, does not necessarily alienate your trust: whether he repels your confidence, or awakens it with irresistible attraction, depends entirely on *what it is* that seems to shun your gaze.

JULY 25

There is a large part of our moral life, — the nutritive source indeed of it all, — with which others cannot intermeddle, and which will only be parched up by their inspection, and lose all its fruit-bearing efficacy.

JULY 26

It is the intimate and lonely passages of experience that consecrate or desecrate all the rest. The night-watches when the head is on the pillow but sleep deserts the eyes, — the private hours when the door of the closet is shut and there is but One that seeth in secret; the inward record of the spirit, illuminated by glowing resolves, or stained by mean motives, or blotted by effacing tears; the self-knowledge of lowered temper and fading purity, or of sweetened affections and serener trust, — belong to a story which it were profane to breathe save to Him who needs no words.

JULY 27

The ceaseless flow of thought and feeling through the mind is for ever telling upon us for better or for worse, and often silently preparing momentous catastrophes of character; and only

in communion with the Searcher of hearts can we see whither we are tending and find the truth of our contrition or our hope.

JULY 28

It is the more dangerous to take counsel with others on the hidden life of the soul, because their standard of judgment, formed from their relation to us, is necessarily different from that of God.

JULY 29

Far above the levels of human intercourse, there must ever be a supreme seclusion of the spirit, whither its highest visions can gather in silence and feel for the touch of the all-realizing God.

JULY 30

Conscious as we are that the very design and structure of our nature include a private chapel of retreat, we carry the same interpretation into our relations with others. There also we recognize an invisible element; with a tender wonder, if ever it makes a sign, yet standing reverently aloof from it, and asking no questions. This sense of what is between the lines of the legible narrative of life is indispensable to all humanizing and

blending affections; and without it we should be driven asunder by hopeless repulsions.

JULY 31

All spiritual strength for ourselves, all noble ties to one another, have their real source in that inner sanctuary where God denies his lonely audience to none. Its secrets are holy; its asylum, inviolate; its consolations, sure; and all are open to the simple heart-word, "Thou art my hiding-place."

A Martineau Year Book

:: AUGUST ::

AUGUST 1

O THOU in whom we live and move and have our being! who hast created and known us, one by one! All generations shall worship thee, while sun and moon endure. Thine we must needs be: if thou but look for us, we are; and if thou but hide thy face, thou prevailest against us and we pass away. Yet thine alone we fear not to be: for thou wilt have all things ordered well, and none can take us out of thy hand that holds us. Though the heavens should be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host fall down as the leaf falleth from the vine, thou wilt keep the faithful souls that trust thee and there shall no evil touch them.

AUGUST 2

O Most Holy, beside whom there is none good! Why must we ever approach thee as wanderers returning from afar? Did we keep near thee with a constant mind, and compose our hearts in converse with thee, there were no lot so blest

as ours. Yet how often do we remember thee no more! In our idle words, we forget thy listening ear; in our time of wealth, thy watch upon our trust; in the world's vain show, thy great reality; and in our anxious troubles, thy waiting to bear the burden for us. We are ashamed of our sinful delusions, and would guard against them with a more vigilant spirit. Oh that thou wouldst speak to us in our temptations, show us how vain it is to call evil good, sustain us in our weakness, and suffer not our foot to be moved!

AUGUST 3

O Thou Everlasting Hope of men! Why should we deem thee a stranger upon the earth, as a wayfarer that tarrieth for a night and turneth aside? Thou art yet in the midst, if we but seek thee with an open soul. May we begin anew to do thy will, that we may know thee as the Living God; renouncing every low desire which may turn the light that is within us to darkness, and surrendering ourselves to that love of what is pure and true, by which we become children of the Highest. In malice, may we be as infants; in understanding, as men; in truth, as the martyrs; in affection, as the angels. May we be fearless to speak, and constant to do, thy perfect will; ready for the earthly cross, or for the heavenly

rest; and faithful to take the bitterest cup of duty, that may not pass from us except we drink it.

AUGUST 4

Father of Spirits! We yield ourselves to thee. We will be afraid of neither sorrow nor death in a world where many saintly souls have sanctified them by a divine patience, and amid a Providence wherein no evil thing can dwell. Clinging unto thee, we shall not perish with the fashion of this world that passeth away. As sparks falling on the river, so shall the glories of our strength go out. But the graces of the holy soul shall be as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever. In thee, O Lord, is our undying trust.

AUGUST 5

It is by looking up beyond the actual, not by looking down into it, by seeking God within, not consulting men without, that you will truly measure the divine claims upon you, and find your duty clear and calm and sacred.

AUGUST 6

Commune with him, the All-holy, and it will become a secret understanding between his spirit and your own, — a trust from him, answered by

assent and love from you; an escape from the poor twilight of human mediocrity into the precincts of a luster which can never fade. A soul that goes apart with this divine vision of goodness has that to feed on which others think not of.

AUGUST 7

"I have meat to eat that ye know not of." What words could more pathetically hint at the spiritual source of strength in that unique career, — that aliment of the holy, true, and good which Plato says is the common well-spring for the thirst of all minds, divine and human? Thus to live out of the invisible and higher, and cling to it as the last reality, is Religion; and this it is which alone takes away the hardness of duty and gives a sweetness to affection, and mingles a sanctity with experience.

AUGUST 8

If we have *no trust*, and frame our speech and tune our voice as having none, we shall often find it difficult to love even our friends as they *appear* to us: our very presence will harden them, and put them on their defense; and by many a carping word, or chafing of the spirit, they will do injustice to themselves. How often may you hear the querulous dialogue, the mutual

complaint, the artificial fence of hurting speech, between those who, if they would but burst the barrier of their pride, would fall into each other's arms, and in dismissing the fiend, let the reconciling angel in!

AUGUST 9

Our humanity, touched with a divine freedom, has larger and more liberal limits than its critics and its students dream: it is not base; it is not noble: it is a vast possibility of baseness or of nobleness; and nothing so kindles its high spiritual consciousness and transfigures it with light divine, as the appeal of trustful sympathy and the expectant light of a brother's faith. Could we not treat the guilt and degradation which deform the world as something unnatural, a spoiling of the idea of God and the possibilities of man, could we not rely on some supporting response when we bear down upon them with expostulating call, it would be all over with our patience and our hope.

AUGUST 10

The rules of quantity, the laws of weight and measure, do not hold beyond the outward world; they disappear wherever the Holy Spirit claims its own. The smallest spiritual store, taken into

the most retired spot, has a self-multiplying power; and if only used with holy trust, will pass the dimensions of nature and betray the resources of the infinite.

AUGUST 11

The great Creative Spirit is ever ready to touch the merest grain of manna in the heart, and make it numerous to shine on all the ground. He to whom space is the seed-plot of stars has in the human soul a tillage more lustrous in the sowing and more enduring in the fruits. When he flings a handful of moral endowments into the furrows of our nature, he never withholds the mellowing winds and dews; and the germs will not perish unless we deny them root. Within the smallest genuine grace he has wrapped up boundless possibilities; and whoever will but believe in it and apply it faithfully shall never fail of more.

AUGUST 12

If you will but find God's living gift within you, and simply trust it when it presses into growth, there is not a waste place of your nature that shall not become habitable, and even glorious with a wild beauty. Whatever you may doubt, *something* there is which you deem true;

however much is common and unclean, you have your gleams of what is surely holy; wherever you are weak, there is some matter on which your secret eye is clear, and your foot is firm. *Here* then is the ground on which your moral life is to be raised. Whithersoever others may lead you, here is your native well-spring of faith and love; whatsoever others may teach, this is the divine oracle to you. Sink deeply into this, and be at one with it, worship in it, live from it, ere you even try to know or undertake to do aught else. Till you get down to the foundations of your natural piety and touch sacred ground, you cannot raise the superstructure of either your knowledge or your action. Heed not what is dark, play not with what is perplexed, believe not your unbelief, till you have flung yourself into your real faith and done the thing you most revere.

AUGUST 13

There is a wonderful power in simple, pure veracity, that knows its own pretenses and can tell its seeing from its dreams; that has an ear for the still voice of God, instead of drowning it in the hum of its own sophistries; and an eye to watch his lights and shades, instead of suffusing all things with its own coloring.

AUGUST 14

The reduction of the mind to spiritual simplicity, the return to a childlike transparency, is a change which, though it seems but the cessation of art, is often beyond the mere wishes and strivings of nature. Most men, when they have discovered their own unreality, and suspected their miserable delusions, continue in them all the same; and feel like one who undergoes shipwreck in a dream, and sees the firm land close by, yet can put forth neither hand nor foot to reach it.

AUGUST 15

Strange that, of all possible tasks, simply *to be what we are* should prove, not the easiest, but infinitely the hardest! It is the saddest evidence, if not of a "fallen," yet of an abused and sin-beclouded nature, that to revert to our primitive faith, to come to ingenuous terms with our genuine love, and live out of the hearty kernel of our being, is at once the nearest and the rarest of attainments. Needing only quiet surrender and bringing only heavenly peace, it is evaded by incessant efforts and postponed for a corroding misery. But wherever this pure grace of simplicity exists, it has for men a secret and irresistible charm. They recognize in it the traces

of God's immediate presence, — the conditions of his inspiration, — the light from him which they too have felt and lost.

August 16

The divine Indwelling in the mind of man is ever, I believe, in some *unconscious* grace at first, — some reverence, some love, which *possesses* him; which is not the object of his thought, but the very color of his thinking; which he did not form by the laws of his movement, but which constitutes his invisible axis of revolution. He does not know his own gift, but only the duty and the God to which it bears him. It makes him feel the falsehood of the world, without being aware of his own truth: it impels him to be alone, and to go up above the mists into the solitude of prayer: it places before him a universe of realities different from that which occupies ordinary men, and throws the great drama of existence, with all its intense interests, off from the transient stage of material semblance into the eternal theater of invisible justice.

August 17

Jesus had gone up from the populous valleys with no view to look on any eye but that of God, or breathe a word, except of prayer: he went, be-

cause there the hills shut out the lower world, and only space and silence reigned: he went, to avoid the false press of human admirations and satisfy the true aspiring of divine want; not to distribute, but himself to taste, the blessed bread of heavenly communion. But when the reverence of the people disappointed him, and they went out afoot from all the cities and preoccupied the mountain grass, he was moved with compassion, "because they were as sheep without a shepherd"; and he let his soul descend in its abundance on them, instead of laying it low in its need and sorrow before God. Wondering, it may be, what he has to give, — having retreated thither just because he had not enough for himself, — yet unable to withhold his supply, he tried how far his store would go, and threw among them the frugal morsels of heavenly truth he had collected from the infinite: "he began to teach them many things," and continued till the day itself was spent: commencing with the scant estimates of aspiration and humility, he found what would suffice for all. So it ever is with the influence of a holy mind.

August 18

In all the higher gifts of the spirit, — in the graces of a pure, devout, and loving nature, in a

simple and holy faith that takes lonely walks with God, — there is this marvelous and blessed paradox: they are the most absolutely inalienable, yet the most freely communicable of all treasures.

August 19

The soul is faithless which, when it is stung by severities and bowed by afflictions, tries to choke its sympathies and bring a frost upon its mellow seasons. It is not by reducing life to less, but by expanding it to more; not by muffling its stern tones, but by ringing its sweetness clearly out, that a serene harmony can be obtained. When duty is severe, we must be more reverently dutiful; if love brings sorrow, we must love more and better; when thought chills us with doubt and fear, we must think again with fuller soul and deeper trust.

August 20

The changeful lot which our lower instinct deprecates is, in truth, the very discipline by which God would draw us to himself. Repugnant to our animal and sentient nature, it kindles the diviner element to life. Our faculties of intellect and feeling, our sense of beauty and of right, the opening out of character and affection,

are made dependent on the stimulus of incessant change.

August 21

As one crisis after another is brought upon our lot, it gives us the means of moral admeasurement and deeper self-knowledge: it reads off the reckoning of our spirits, and tells us whether we more deeply live, or more begin to die. Each newest sorrow revives the thought of those before, and spreads out the past in tender colors before the eye: the pictures of other years, the scenes once pressed by our more elastic feet, the dear forms that were with us there and held us by the hand, stand out in the clear and silent light: and their very looks may tell us whether any grosser film has gathered on our soul; whether we can meet their calm and holy face; whether, as we are further from them in one direction, we are nearer to them in another; and whether the same atmosphere of God seems to enfold us both and make us one with them and him.

August 22

It is one of the great compensations which balance, more equally than men suppose, the good and ill of human existence, that where there is

more affliction there is often more affection too: if the burden is heavier to be borne, the soul is more elastic to bear it; and by many a sorrowing creature, flushed with the inspiration of love, duties are thrown profusely and spontaneously off, which the painful struggles of unawakened ease could scarcely lift.

AUGUST 23

So completely is it the Providential plan to secure to us the discipline of change, that, when we fall asleep on the crust of usage, a fire is immediately kindled beneath us and we sleep on a volcano. Our very inertia operates as an instrument to prepare for us new crises that shall force us to spring to our feet once more.

AUGUST 24

God has made nothing in this world *to keep* — nothing, at least, that has a beauty and that bears a fruit; death only and negation, deformity and barrenness, will flourish when let alone. The individual mind, abandoned to negligence, watched by no eye of conscience, bathed in no presence of God, exercised in no athletics of duty, loosens all its healthy structure, and sinks into moral decline; little, perhaps, suspecting its own degeneracy till surprised into some awful degra-

dation, and wakening into shame. No institution, no State, no church, will go on of itself and hold its footing in the nature of things, while its guardians and trustees are dozing on their watch.

August 25

If holiness be infinite, and we are not, is it not an awful thing to have the susceptibilities, without the powers, of infinitude? And was it not the work of Christ to give us rest from the strife and sorrows of compunction? Yes: not however a rest *within ourselves*, as if we either ceased from sin, or could see it with other and less saddened eyes; but a rest *out of ourselves*, a pure and perfect *trust* in Him whose spirit draws us from before and whose pity supports us from behind. It is an unfaithful attempt, to escape from the burdens of self-reproach otherwise than by completer surrender.

August 26

To me, I confess, it seems a very considerable thing, just to believe in God; — difficult indeed to avoid honestly, but not easy to accomplish worthily, and impossible to compass perfectly: — a thing not lightly to be professed, but rather humbly to be sought; not to be found at the end of any syllogism, but in the inmost fountains of

purity and affection; — not the sudden gift of intellect, but to be earned by a loving and brave life.

August 27

It is through natural experiences, — the treasured sanctities of every true life, — that God "discovereth to us deep things out of darkness, and turneth into light the shadow of death." They constitute the *lesser religions* of the soul; and, say what you will, they come and go with the *greater*, and put forth leaf and blossom from the same root.

August 28

We are so constituted throughout, — in memory, in affection, in conscience, in intellect, — that we cannot rest in the literal aspect of things as they materially come to us. No sooner are they in our possession than we turn them into some crucible of thought which saves their essence and precipitates their dross; and their pure idea emerges as our lasting treasure, to be remembered, loved, willed, and believed. What we thus gain then, — is it a falsification? or a revelation? What we discard, — is it the sole constant, which alone we ought to keep? or the truly perishable, which we deservedly let slip?

August 29

On every side the relation of our life to the supernatural which penetrates and enfolds it, betrays itself in our consciousness. The intellect, which seeks to transcend the finite in space and time and truth; the conscience, which owns the infinite in duty and stays itself on the infinite in love; indicate the scale of our affinities, and attest a nature that liveth not by bread alone but by every word of communion with God. Moulded of perishable and imperishable elements, we sink and rise, we sleep and wake, we faint and struggle on; toiling outwardly for transitory wants, pining inwardly with everlasting thirst.

August 30

Be it not in blind unconsciousness that we carry in us the seal of the Eternal. Shall God's Spirit plead with us every day and never reduce us to a sweet and holy mind? Because our feet are in the dust shall our heart never go up into the mountain to pray, and our thought never pace the heights of meditation? Shall the years sweep by and take from us all that is mortal, without waking the immortal life within us from the winter in which it sleeps? Shall we wait to die into the surprise of God, instead of taking his

dear and solemn converse now and for ever? Shall we dream of a future eternity, and be blind to that which surrounds us every instant, — which brings its judgments to our conscience, its present God to our trust, its mighty company of saints to our affection?

August 31

Ah! let the film of the carnal mind fall from our eyes; and yielding ourselves to be led by the Spirit of God, let us claim our divine sonship and enter on its glorious liberty. There will be no sadness then in the flow of life and change: time will take nothing but our delusions away; will enfold us in a warmer light of divine affection; and clear the everlasting air, till we see even as we are seen.

A Martineau Year Book

:: SEPTEMBER ::

SEPTEMBER 1

ETERNAL GOD, who committest to us the swift and solemn trust of life; since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour for serving thee is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of thy holy will; not waiting for to-morrow, but yielding to-day. Lay to rest, by the persuasion of thy Spirit, the resistance of our passion, indolence, or fear. Consecrate with thy presence the way our feet may go; and the humblest work will shine, and the roughest places be made plain. Lift us above unrighteous anger and mistrust into faith and hope and charity, by a simple and steadfast reliance on thy sure will: and so may we be modest in our time of wealth, patient under disappointment, ready for danger, serene in death. In all things draw us to the mind of Christ, that thy lost image may be traced again, and thou mayst own us as at one with him and thee.

SEPTEMBER 2

It is not *similarity* but *dis*similarity, that constitutes the qualification for heartfelt union among mankind: and the mental affinities resemble the electric, in which like poles repel, while the unlike attract. A family, — than which there is no more genuine type of Nature's method of arrangement, — is throughout a combination of *opposites;* the woman depending on the man, — whose very strength however exists only by her weakness; the child hanging on the parent, — whose power were no blessing were it not compelled to stoop in gentleness; the brother protecting the sister, — whose affections would have but half their wealth were they not brought to lean on him with trustful pride: and even among seeming equals, the impetuous quieted by the thoughtful, and the timid finding shelter with the brave. That there "are diversities of gifts" is the reason why there "is one spirit"; and it is because one is reliable for knowledge, and another for resolve, and a third for the graces of a balanced mind, that *all* are held in the bonds of a pure affection.

SEPTEMBER 3

The world is not given to us as a play-ground

or a school alone, where we may learn to fight our way upon our own level, and leave others scope for a fair race; but as a domestic system, surrounding us with weaker souls for our hand to succor, and stronger ones for our hearts to serve. If the one set of relations is needful for the formation of manly qualities, it is the other that gives occasion to the divine.

SEPTEMBER 4

The faith of Christ throws together the unlike ingredients which civilization had sifted out from one another. Every true church reproduces the unity which the world had dissolved; and for the precarious cohesion of similar elements substitutes again the attraction of dissimilar.

SEPTEMBER 5

The moment a man becomes a *disciple*, his exclusive self-reliance vanishes: the rigid lines of his mere manly posture become softened: he trusts another than himself: he loves a better spirit than his own; and, while living in what is human, aspires to what is divine. And in this new opening of a world above him, a fresh light comes down upon the world beneath him: the infinite glory of the heaven reveals the infi-

nite sadness there is on earth. Standing no longer on his own level, as if that were all, he feels himself in the midst, between a higher existence to which he would attain, and a lower to which he would give help. Aspiration and pity rush into his heart from opposite directions: he forgets himself: the stiff, strong footing taken by his will gives way; and he is mellowed into the attitudes of *looking up* and *lifting up*.

SEPTEMBER 6

If there were no *ranks* of souls within our view; if all were upon a platform of republican equality; if there were but a uniform *citizenship* of spirits, and no royalty of goodness, and no slavery to sin; if nothing unutterably great subdued us to allegiance, and nothing sad and shameful roused us to compassion; — I believe that all divine truth would remain entirely inaccessible to us, and our existence would be reduced to that of intelligent and amiable animals: the noblest chamber of the soul, the vault of its hidden worship, remaining locked, the corresponding region of the universe, the hiding-place of thunder — the secret dwelling of the Almighty, — would be closed against our most penetrating suspicions. And as the arrangements by which we stand —

members of a graduated series — with beings above and beings below, is the origin of faith; so is the practical recognition of this position the great means of feeding the perpetual fountains of the Christian life.

SEPTEMBER 7

Many an earnest and devout heart, too lowly to teach others, too quiet to proclaim itself, you may find watching the scene of human things through a constant atmosphere of piety; recognizing a holy light on all; touching each duty with a gentle and willing love; yet saying not a word, because unable to make a special tale of that which is but the truth of nature.

SEPTEMBER 8

Assuredly, he to whose ready speech the sanctities most quickly come, who has no difficulty in running over everlasting things, and never pauses at the awful name, and can coin the words for what is most dear and deep, is not often the most truly devout.

SEPTEMBER 9

Language has two functions, easily distinguished, yet easily forgotten. It is an instru-

ment of communication with one another; and an instrument of thought within ourselves. Plato used to say that thought and speech are the same: only that thought is the mind's silent dialogue with itself. It need not however be always silent: in its higher moods it presses for utterance: it cannot go on to rise without casting away the burthen of its words; and outbursts of song and pulses of prayer are as successive strokes of the ever-beating wing of aspiration. But in this we want no one to hear us: we could bear no watchful human presence: the voice is but the relief to the spirit overcharged; and our nature could not thus revolve in its own circuit, except in the loneliness which shelters it from foreign attractions.

SEPTEMBER 10

Speech therefore assumes two forms; converse and soliloquy: the one intended to convey our thought abroad; the other to detain it at home: the one, opening what we wish; the other, what we hide: the one, the common talk of life; the other equivalent to silence, except to those who may overhear. Of the latter only did Jesus say, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." He knew that what men

utter face to face is often far different from the real thought of their minds; that they are no less ashamed of their best feelings than of their worst: and that, by watching the coin of words that passes between them in the open commerce of life, you can ill judge of the secret wealth or insolvency of their souls. To estimate them aright, you must wait till the company disperse; and linger near them when they speak, amid the silence of God, not to others, but from themselves.

SEPTEMBER 11

The double-dealer has but a single nature: but in the pure and guileless there are two souls; of which the one comes forward amid human things with quick and genial speech, while the other ever sits with finger on the lips. The one achieves its end with energy and stir like that of the city's industry; the other noiselessly, like the spring growth of forests and of field: the one opens gladly out, the other shrinks, as if scorched, within, at the light of the human eye.

SEPTEMBER 12

Our nature is as a flower that shines of itself with one color by night, and reflects from the sun

another by day; and those who see only its borrowed gaiety at noon know nothing of its own fainter beauty beneath the stars.

SEPTEMBER 13

Religion in the soul is like a spirit hiding in enshadowed forests: call it into the staring light, it is exhaled and seen no more; or as the whispering of God among the trees; peer about behind the leaves, and it is not there.

SEPTEMBER 14

Men in deep reverence do not talk to one another, but remain with hushed mind side by side. Each one feels, though he cannot tell how it is, that words limit what faith declares unlimited; that they divide and break to pieces what it comprehends and embraces as a whole; that they distribute into dead members what it discerns as a life of beauty indivisible; that they reduce to successive propositions what it adores as a simultaneous and everlasting reality.

SEPTEMBER 15

The whole operation of the mind in communicating by speech is the direct opposite of that which bends in worship; the one laboring after

definite conceptions and scientific reasoning; the other intuitively evading both, and bursting the fetters which the provinces of nature own, but the infinity of God rejects. Hence it is that men lower the voice as they distantly approach these things, and deem it fit to let their words be few.

SEPTEMBER 16

True, there is a sceptic, as well as a devout silence on the highest things. But who is there that cannot tell at a glance the difference between the shrinking of unbelief and the shrinking of reverence? Look only at their eye; and the shallow gloss of the one is not like the deep light of the other. The one pushes the matter externally away; the other hides it internally from view. The one is averse to take the divine ideas into the mind; the other recoils from putting them out. The one yields to the repulsion of dislike; the other exercises the shelter of an ineffable love.

SEPTEMBER 17

Prayer, like poetry, can never be anything but thought aloud: if ever it is "said for the sake of them that stand by," it is a mockery and a pre-

tense, from which every soul that is akin to Christ will shrink with abhorrence and with awe; and which none who had been altogether steeped in his spirit could ever ascribe to him.

SEPTEMBER 18

Never do we more completely deceive ourselves than when we fancy that the work of the understanding is durable, while that of our richer genius is evanescent; that what we know is solid, what we aspire after and adore in thought is unsubstantial: that the achievements of physical discovery are the fixed products of time, while the visions of poetry are but the adornments of a passing age. How plainly does historical experience contradict this estimate!

SEPTEMBER 19

Of no nation, of no period, within the limits of known and transmitted civilization, does the most advanced science remain true for us: while of none has the genuine poetry perished: Thales and Archimedes have been obsolete for centuries; while old Homer is fresh as ever, and delights the modern schoolboy only less than he did the Greek hero. The acuteness of the Athenian intellect has left us no account of any law of Nature

which the greatest masters of ancient knowledge deciphered as we do now: but the strains of Job and the rapt song of Isaiah will never be worn out while a human soul is on the earth and a divine heaven above it.

SEPTEMBER 20

The readings of philosophy, the creeds of theology, are alike transitory: but the discernment of sacred truth and beauty is perpetual, and without essential change. Never knowing but *in part*, we find all our knowledge successively vanishing away: but in adoring the grandeur, feeling the solemnity, and aspiring to the perfection of the whole, the inspirations of genius and the yearnings of faith are consentaneous and eternal.

SEPTEMBER 21

Those who feel *nothing higher* than themselves, who live upon the level and see the world upon the same, who have prudence in their own affairs, humanity for others, but reverence for none, are hardly in place, you would say, on the pavement where Christians kneel. Not that any one would deliberately maintain, or consciously think, himself to be above the attitude of dependence and aspiration. But how few there are in these days

whose life seems to *set* into that attitude, — whose eyes seem to carry a look beyond, whose features tell you that they watch and wait, — in whose moral deportment there is a leaning upon strength other than their own.

SEPTEMBER 22

Christendom is broadly distinguished from the Greek and Roman world by its spirit of intenser aspiration, — its inability to repose upon the present and finite, as if that were all, — its constant search, behind the veil, for the perfection only hinted by the tracings thrown upon the eye. Its art, its piety, its moral life, hardly less than its worship, have betrayed the sense of a world transcending experience, — an archetypal excellence that leaves all our achievements deep in shade.

SEPTEMBER 23

In all things, the sense of *shortcoming* has pervaded the consciousness of modern times, and evinced the different standard applied as the measure of the world. Notwithstanding drowsy periods and unfaithful men, a certain inability comes back upon us to be reconciled with our guilty selves or a guilty world around us: the

evil startles us with new surprise and we fling our protest against it once more; or if the old have been used to it too long for this, the young bring to it a fresh soul and see it as it is, and put it again to shame.

SEPTEMBER 24

Permanent acquiescence in deformity, failure, and sin, our Leader of faith, — that tempted yet holy Son of God, — has rendered impossible for us. He has made us aware how little this is the real meaning of things; how far different is the Divine thought of the world from so deplorable a fact. He has hinted to us of a "Kingdom of God," and bids us pray that it may "come"; — and, however dimly and interruptedly, the vision will not cease to haunt us, and refuse us rest, of a life more genial than ours to God's holy Spirit, and of a world more like the abode of a reconciled nature and an immortal race.

SEPTEMBER 25

How much simpler and more true to our inmost experience, to own that though we may *mar* we do not *make* our own best inspirations; that they steal upon us like the dawning light, which the wakeful is the first to see and the faithful most

quick to use, but which neither can command to break in storm or glory. Yes; *He* is the ground of all our good; and all that we inadequately call our *ideals*, the inner experience that looks at us through the symbols of the universe, the better possibilities that seem ever to struggle through the material conditions of life, the contrite longing to be free from self and at peace with God, — these, while they are in us, yet are not of us; they are not ours, but his; nay, they are his very self; first, standing at the door to knock, and then, if the latch be lifted by a hospitable hand, entering to abide and dwell, and turning the bread and wine of life into a sacrament.

SEPTEMBER 26

Thus, in your noblest visions, you stand, not before your own quivering reflection, but before the *eternal essences of things;* there is offered to your hand a divine and adamantine nucleus which will persevere through belief or unbelief of men, — the temple-stone which, however often rejected by the builders, shall none the less become the head of the corner. In comparison with this unwasting treasure which visits you *ideally* (as surely all holy spirit *must*), whatever you call *actual*, — the material products and human as-

pects of to-day, of yesterday, nay of all historic time, — must be pronounced transient and unreal.

SEPTEMBER 27

When the blessed Spirit that bloweth where it listeth visits you and stirs the plumage of the soul, seek no cowardly shelter from it, but fling yourself upon it, and, though its sweep be awful, you shall be sustained. Only, do this, do all, not in presumptuous daring, but in divine submission; in dependence not on any strength that can be spent, but on the ever-living stay of all that trust in him.

SEPTEMBER 28

It is a shallow mind which can see to the bottom of its own beliefs, and is conscious of nothing but what it can measure in evidence and state in words; — which feels in its own guilt no depth it cannot fathom, and in another's holiness no beauty it can only pine to seize; which reads on the face of things, — on the glory of the earth and sky, on human joy and grief, on birth and death, in pity and heroic sacrifice, in the eyes of a trusting child and the composure of a saintly countenance, — no meanings that cannot be printed; and which

is never drawn, alone and in silence, into prayer exceeding speech.

SEPTEMBER 29

Our faculties and affections are graduated to objects greater, better, fairer, and more enduring, than the order of Nature gives us here. They demand a scale and depth of being which outwardly they do not meet, yet inwardly they are the organ for apprehending. Hence a certain glorious sorrow must ever mingle with our life: all our actual is transcended by our possible; our visionary faculty is an overmatch for our experience: like the caged bird, we break ourselves against the bars of the finite, with a wing that quivers for the infinite. To stifle this struggle, to give up the higher aspiration, and be content with making our small lodgings snug, is to cut off the summit of our nature and live upon the flat of a mutilated humanity. To let the struggle be, however it may sadden us, to trust the pressure of the soul towards diviner objects and more holy life, and measure by it the invisible ends to which we tend, this is true faith; the unfading crown of an ideal and progressive nature. It is indeed, and ever must be, notwithstanding the light that circles it, a crown of

thorns; and the brow that wears it can never wholly cease to bleed.

SEPTEMBER 30

Whence is that tincture of sanctity which Christ has given to sorrow, and which makes his form at once the divinest and most pathetic in the world? It is that he has wakened by his touch the illimitable aspirations of our bounded nature, and flung at once into our thought and affection a holy beauty, a divine Sonship, into which we can only slowly grow. And this is a condition which can never cease to be. Among the true Children of the Highest, who would wish to be free from it? Let the glorious burden lie! How can we be angry at a sorrow which is the birth-pang of a diviner life?

A Martineau Year Book

:: OCTOBER ::

OCTOBER 1

ALMIGHTY FATHER! what are we, that we should stretch forth our hands to thee, and aspire to meet thee, spirit to Spirit? We are less than the least of all thy mercies. We have nothing to bring but thine own gifts, which we have not duly sanctified; and from the shadows of our minds we can but vainly feel after thy light inaccessible. Yet, gracious Lord, though we cannot rise to thee, thy tender mercy bends to us, and draws us with cords of love to own thy secret presence as the soul of every blessing, the solemn look of every duty, the healing anguish of our contrition, and the life of all that is not dead within us. Our help is only from thee: may we keep near to thy refuge, as the shade at our right hand.

OCTOBER 2

Preserve us blameless, O Lord, in our goings out and comings in this day. Beholding in our hearts the image of thy perfection, may we be

pure with a heavenly purity, faithful in our tasks, watchful against temptation, of tender conscience, of patient spirit, of generous temper, and of reverent humility as ever in thy sight. Fill us with the simplicity of a divine purpose, that we may be inwardly at one with thy holy will, and lifted above vain wishes of our own. Help us to keep clean our hearts from unholy thoughts, our lips from rash words, our senses from unworthy indulgence, and our whole life from whatever grieves thy Spirit. Set free from every detaining desire or reluctance, may we heartily surrender all our powers to the work which thou hast given us to do; rejoicing in any toil, and fainting under no hardness that may befall us as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; and counting it as our crown of blessing if we may join the company of thy faithful who have kept thy name and witnessed to thy kingdom in every age.

OCTOBER 3

Touch our eyes, O Lord, with clearness, and place the world before them truly; that we may see through its illusions to its sorrows and its sins, and never trust ourselves to it without the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, and the unwearied courage of hope and love. Prepare us to seek our rest, not in outward ease, but

in inward devotedness: only fulfill unto us the word of the Chief of saints; leave us his peace, while we remain here; and then receive us unto thyself, to mingle with the mighty company of our forerunners.

October 4

In every earnest life, there are weary flats to tread, with the heavens out of sight, — no sun, no moon, — and not a tint of light upon the path below; when the only guidance is the faith of brighter hours, and the secret Hand we are too numb and dark to feel. But to the meek and faithful it is not always so. Now and then, something touches the dull dream of sense and custom, and the desolation vanishes away; the Spirit leaves its witness with us: the divine realities come up from the past and straightway enter the present: the ear into which we poured our prayer is not deaf; the infinite eye to which we turned is not blind, but looks in with answering mercy on us. The mystery of life and the grievousness of death are gone: we know now the little from the great, the transient from the eternal: we can possess our souls in patience; and neither the waving palms and scattered flowers of triumph can elate us, nor the weight of any cross appear too hard to bear.

October 5

Tell me not that these undulations of the soul are the mere instability of enthusiasm and infirmity. Are they not found characteristically in the greatest and deepest men, — Augustine, Tauler, Luther? Nay, did not the Son of God himself, the very type of our humanity, experience them more than all? Did he not quit the daily path, now for a Transfiguration, and now for a Gethsemane? And had he not his hours on the mountain all night? and what, think you, passed beneath those stars? Ah no! those intermittent movements are the sign of divine gifts, not of human weakness. God has so arranged the chronometry of our spirits that there shall be thousands of silent moments between the striking hours.

October 6

I presume not to say *how* it is God takes up his abode with us; *where*, across the melting colors the precise line should be drawn that divides the human from the divine. But wherever he so dwells with the soul as to impart his own character, and lift before our eye the beauty of holiness, it is his supreme expression, as it is his rarest. Accordingly it is this which he selects for his supernatural revelation of himself which

stands unique,—"the Word made flesh,"—the divine life humanized, and the human glorified,—the blending of both in communion and reconciliation. In that sacrifice culminate the intermittent visitations of God: it was not tidal only: it is once for all; and as it was supreme, it was solitary too. As all the special goodness, grace, and truth of historic men give pauses of blessed rest, and are not the week-day, but the sabbath of the world; so is the divine perfectness of Christ the sabbath of sabbaths, the solemn jubilee of our humanity.

October 7

It is not intellect from which God hides himself, but selfishness and pride; which may belong alike to taught and untaught, and darken the soul of sophist or of clown. The words of Christ no doubt imply that knowledge of other things may co-exist with blindness as to that which is divine; and the apprehension of divine truth with ignorance of other things.

October 8

In its infancy, the soul simply apprehends what is given it to perceive; lies confidingly on the bosom of Nature and lets the morning beams come into the full and wondering eyes; does not

read off by skillful signs the absent and the future, but mingles with the present and takes it in; starts no doubts, is entangled in no reflections, but lives straight out of the unquestioned instincts of the hour. Later on, this impulsive freshness is all changed.

October 9

We have reached so much by circuitous paths and mediate contrivance, that the early starting-point and assumed base of all our mental reckoning has been lost: we no longer know the simple from the complex, the artificial from the natural in thought: we use the tissue which we have woven to dispute the fiber of which it is made; and follow down the streams of reasoning, exploring as we go, in hope of truths that all the while lie far up at the fountain-head.

October 10

It is this *loss of the habit of natural trust*, this tendency to anxious quest of something distant instead of pure repose on what is *here*, that, according to Christ's prayer, hides God from the "wise and prudent." And, conversely, it is the surrender to spontaneous light and love, the simple passing out upon it into life, without doubt

of its guidance or scrutiny of its claims, that reveals him unto "babes."

October 11

How profoundly true this is, — that in divine things the little child may know what the great philosopher may miss, — will appear if you only think what God is, and whether he is likely to be discovered on any explorer's track or by any artifice of calculation.

October 12

If you believe that God exists, and understand your words when you call him "infinite" and "eternal," you cannot expect to find him as *one object among many*, but as a *Spirit in all;* the living reality of all appearance; the firmament of thought that holds the stars; the omnipresent deep that throws up the tides of history and the ripplings of private care; the sole power of the universe without; the archetype of the free soul within; and the secret source of the meaning that dwells in everything. Were he at all away, we might step forth to seek him; did he ever slumber, we might watch for the date of his waking times. But living forever in us and around us, he does not enable us to compare his

presence with his absence: if we miss him, it is from his perpetuity and nearness; if we meet him, it is not by feeling after him abroad, but by dropping inwards and returning home.

October 13

The true attitude of the devout mind always involves a certain quietism and self-relinquishment. Instead of pressing curiously forward, it sinks in meditation back, rests upon the moment as divine, and feels the very pavement beneath its feet as holy. It has neither any distance to go, nor any time to wait, in order to close in with the Spirit of God; only to own and trust him now and here, — to pass into his hand with simple faith, a disarmed and unreluctant captive to his will.

October 14

For it is the great marvel of the Christian character that the completest *self-sacrifice* gives the completest *self-possession;* that only the captive soul, which has flung her rights away, has all her powers free: and that simply *to serve* under the instant orders of the living God is the highest qualification for command. This is the meaning of that great saying of Cromwell's,

"*One never mounts so high as when one knows not whither one is going*": a saying which "the wise and prudent" scorned as a confession of blindness, but which reveals to simpler minds the deepest truth.

October 15

There are, in fact, two types of human greatness, — the Pagan and the Christian, — the moral and the religious, — the secular and the divine. The former has its root and essence in *trying* hard; the latter, in *trusting* gently: the one depends on *voluntary energy*; the other on *relinquishment of personal will* to cast every burden upon God. The one chooses its own ends, elaborates the means, attempts to see several moves before it, and secures the unity of its course and character by plan and vigilance; the other, possessed by a God-given end, becomes its organ and its implement, and simply lets it use, from day to day, the entire powers of the soul.

October 16

However intense the stimulus which ambition or even conscience may give to the intellect and will, it is not to be compared with the might assumed by the faculties of their own accord,

when released from fear and care, and flung into the Almighty hand to be wielded at his will. There is no instrument so tremendous in this world as a human soul thus committed to what is diviner than itself: it is as the two-edged sword of the Spirit with the scabbard thrown away; and wherever difficulties are to be cleft, and fiends of evil to be cut down, there it will be found, flashing on the Providential field. Be it the saintly woman, or be it the God-fearing Puritan, "None mount so high as those who know not whither they go."

October 17

The Infinite is not hid in a corner; or locked among the treasures of the Vatican; or lingering among the antiquities of the first century; or waiting behind some future and undevised experiment, — that we have any key to turn, any bar to remove, any choicest instruments to invent ere he becomes accessible.

October 18

It is not till we fall from the platform of our natural trusts that the wheels and pulleys of argument are plied to lift us back again; and the artifices of reason would never be needed but to

meet and balance the artifices of doubt. The dark spirits which the restless intellect evokes, a brighter intellect alone is able to disperse: but when it has cast them out, it has but chastened its own work and reinstated us in natural health. Religion is born ere thought begins: it is re-born when thought is consummated and enters into its glory.

October 19

How often will a child, by mere force of unconsciousness and simplicity, penetrate to the center of some great truth with a startling ease and directness! And in this the greatness of genius is like the power of a child: it is as much moral as intellectual; it arises from emotions so distinct and earnest as to secure singleness of purpose and vivacity of expression; from some absorbing reverence which disenthralls the mind from lower passions, and gives it courage to be true!

October 20

It is easy, — I will not say inevitable, — to lose the early qualifications for discipleship; difficult, — I will not say impossible, — to recover them when lost. The uplifted, listening look of our

young days, the unclaimed mind beseeching you for truth, — the love so wise, the thought so deep from very artlessness, are cheated away, except from the rarest of beings, by the hard falsehoods of experience, and exchanged for lower moods in the whirl of interest or ambition. The trustful spirit, that feels in the beauty and goodness of things resistless reason to believe them real, accepts too soon the bribe of disappointment, goes over to the side of sceptic shrewdness, demands inordinate security ere it will confide in man or God, and dwells in the universe as if it were a peddler's hall.

October 21

On questions of practical morals, yet more emphatically than on subjects of speculative research, is it true that pure sympathies produce a clear intellect, and that *his* judgments are most likely to be just, who most habitually seeks the will of the eternal Father.

October 22

One who looks on the world as his appointed post of strenuous duty, and feels on him the divine charge to leave it better than he found it, must close neither eye nor heart against any of its ills.

October 23

Our judgments of human character and relations will not be right unless our sympathies be not disinterested only, but pure. The moral feelings must transcend the social; the sense of duty be stronger than the instincts of affection. In addition to the negative qualification of *not* seeking our own will, we must have the positive one of seeking the will of the Father who is in heaven.

October 24

In times of danger, where it is needful to risk something or lose everything, men, possessed of no higher inspiration, lose their presence of mind: and while they stand in timid calculation, the one only moment of faithful duty slips away. They will profess perhaps to have been overpowered by the sense of their responsibility; — an unconscious acknowledgement of the confusion into which all self-regarding feelings throw the mind; — for no man, truly earnest about an object, critically pauses or turns aside to examine how he is acquitting himself. No! great as are the achievements of inferior principles of action, — the love of power, the pursuit of glory, — the only heroism fitted for the last extremity of cir-

cumstance, is that of disinterested Duty. Others may skillfully and firmly use up their outward resources to the last: but the Christian hero, when all these are gone, has yet to spend *himself*.

October 25

Childhood is emphatically the period of safe instincts; permitting it to try for a while the unreflective life of creatures less than human. Only the ingenuity of artificial corruption can spoil them. In themselves, they are incapable of excess, and offer few temptations to wrong that are not adequately counteracted by some balancing affection. They simply ask to be let alone and suffer no perversion: give them room to open out; use no premature compression to drive them back; and they will check each other, and find a fairer proportion than can be given by your rules.

October 26

But if both World and Church will only learn what the child's simple presence may teach, instead of teaching what he cannot innocently learn, the truth may dawn upon them that he seldom requires to be led, — only not to be *mis*led. If it be romance to look with something of

reverent affection at the being not yet remote from God, it is at least a romance that has come to us on a voice most full of grace and truth: it breathes fresh from the hills of Nazareth; and its emblem is that wondering infant in the arms of Christ, visible thence over all the earth, as the chosen watch at the gate of heaven.

October 27

Judge not the child's mind by your own; nor fancy that you have a religion to create against some powerful resistance, which skill is needed to evade or proof to overcome. His spirit, if unspoiled, is with you, not against you, when you speak of God. Faith is the natural and normal state of the human heart; doubt is its feverish disease: and that which may be the fit remedy for your sickness may be the poison of his health. He needs but the fresh air and pure nourishment of life; give him not the pharmacopœia of theology, instead of the bread of heaven.

October 28

Scarcely need the child *know* that he has a soul; it is ours to take care that, when at length he finds it, it shall be a noble and august discovery; full of admirations never to be superseded, and of love that shall bring no repentance.

October 29

If you would prepare, not a mere baby-house, but a right noble structure of faith, in which the soul shall have a life-interest, you will not only lay the foundation broad and deep, but avoid filling in with mean and perishable materials the parts, of which the childish eye may see the surface, but which only the manly thought can build in strength. The unnoticed outline of system may be so drawn that painful and deforming erasures hereafter may be spared; and by mere expansion of the old boundary, and insertion of new beauty and new wealth, the earnest veracity of the philosopher may be but the glorified piety of the child.

October 30

As larger views of the universe and life are opened out, a Providence will be felt to abide there still: the laws which are detected, the unsuspected grandeur that is revealed, will be entered in some orderly manner as parts of the mighty scheme; and, instead of subverting the central and divine authority, will be but a province added to its sway. And as the years of deep and subjective religion come, and the mind sinks in wonder before its own mysteries, the self-con-

sciousness, as it wakes and starts up, will on the instant see God standing in the midst.

OCTOBER 31

We must remember that religion is after all beyond the range of mere tuition. It is not a didactic thing that words can give and silence can withhold. It is a spirit; a life; an aspiration; a contagious glory from soul to soul; a spontaneous union with God. Our inward unfaithfulness is sure to extinguish it; our outward policy cannot produce it. To love and to do the Holy Will is the ultimate way, not only to know the truth, but to lead others to know it too.

A Martineau Year Book

:: NOVEMBER ::

NOVEMBER 1

ETERNAL GOD, to whose shelter we ever fly! When our thoughts go forth to seek thee, they are lost in such infinitude. Yet, though thy ways are unsearchable, we cannot and would not depart from before thee, but would rest and lie still on thee, to go whithersoever thou wilt till thou callest us home.

Father of spirits! our cry to thee is only for mercy and for help. Teach us to remember our sins with so effectual a sadness that thou, Lord, mayst remember them no more. Teach us, by thy ways of gentleness or of severity, that we are not our own, but thine; — appointed, not to do our own foolish pleasure, but to watch thy directing looks and follow the orders of thine eye. Subdue us, good Lord, to the humility of Christ. For the hardness of pride give us the strength of meekness. Dispose us, in the spirit of a loving child, to take thy hand, though thou leadest us by paths that are dark and strange. May we hold all thy gifts as in trust from thee.

Never, by the custom of thy mercies, let us take occasion for complaint and reluctance when they are withdrawn. Though thou only lendest us that which we may love, we bless thee that the love itself thou givest us for ever. And whenever thou rendest our comforts from us, oh! refresh us with the memories of a grateful heart and the hopes of a holy faith.

Disposer of life, who appointest unto all their tasks, and measurest out their days of service! behold, our time is short and our work is great: give us the soul of industry and a heavenly spirit of alacrity, that when the shadows of evening close, we may be able to say "It is finished." As thou workest hitherto, with sleepless mercy, for us, so may we work with thee; and morning and evening find us ready for thy perfect will. May our souls be as one that fulfilleth the night-watches; — awake with a constant awe, and strong with a divine courage; communing with thee in our silent walks of duty, and looking for the light of thy everlasting morning.

NOVEMBER 2

The depth and beauty which enthusiasm everywhere beholds, — are they *really there*, that we should try to rise into the vision? or are they a *romance*, that we should seek to wipe them off?

Does the mind put them into Nature, or take them out? Are we to honor their revealer as a prophet of divine endowment? — or their disenchanter, as the model of human wisdom? For my own part, without in the least denying that it is possible for an idealising fervor to see too much, I believe we are in more danger from the dullness which sees too little. In relation to the highest truth, mere sense and intellect, looking through the frosty air of a wintry heart, may be but instruments of delusion.

NOVEMBER 3

If you will believe only in the perceptions of sense and distrust the intimations of the spirit, it is a question how low you will descend for your test of certainty. Will you depend upon your own faculties in proportion as they are simply animal, and deny them in proportion as they are divine? — confide in your eyesight and give the lie to the conscience and affections?

NOVEMBER 4

Call it imagination, call it wonder, call it love, whatever it be that shows us the deeper significance of the world and humanity and makes the difference between the surface-light of sagacity and the interpenetrating glow of worship, we owe

to it whatever highest truth, whatever trustiest guidance we have.

NOVEMBER 5

Does not the poet, does not the prophet, ask for a reader with enthusiasm enough to appreciate him, and complain that by others he is *not understood?* If the greatest *human* works and utterances demand for their apprehension a soul kindled with intense affections, can we doubt what is the qualification, and what the disqualification, for reading the *Divine?* May not their Author, — Soul of our souls, who breathes the eternal poem of the universe and attunes our minds to hear it, who provides at once the hymn of the morning stars that sing together and the chords of the spirit that tremble to their strain, ask as clear a response from us as we demand from one another?

NOVEMBER 6

When, therefore, in higher moments brought by the sorrows of life, the tension of duty, or the silence of thought, you catch some faint tones of a voice diviner than your own, know that you are not alone, and *who* it is that is with you. Stay not in the cold monologue of solitary meditation, but fling yourself into the communion of

prayer. Fold not the personal shadows round you; lie open to the gleam that pierces them; confide in it as the brightest of realities, — a path of heavenly light streaking the troubled waters of your being, and leading your eye to the orb that sends it.

NOVEMBER 7

Here and there you may meet with those who recall you at once from the accessories to the essence of our existence; who, instead of spelling its little syllables, interpret for you its great meaning; who do its work, not from a menial point *within* it, but from a lordly position beyond it, and rather *pass through* the present than are imprisoned *in* it.

NOVEMBER 8

Those to whom *life is a succession of particular businesses*, however intelligent, energetic, and conscientious, must rank in the scale of human excellence below those to whom *life is rather the flow of one spirit.*

NOVEMBER 9

Rules may help you to manufacture, but cannot inspire you to create. Now, there is a difference analogous to this in the moral administration of

human life. Duty has its artisan, who labors by prescription to the will; and its artist, who shapes forth the love within his heart. The one lives after the manner of the journeyman, executing each separate order as it may happen to come in; the other, in the spirit of the poet, fashioning his own designs, and expressing through them all one truth, one prayer, one hope.

NOVEMBER 10

A perpetual exaggeration of small things will never make a great one; and those who take a series of limited views, for want of the ascendant faith and love which blend them into one vast prospect, leave on you, after all, the impression that our existence is made up of petty matters, — that our world is a colony of busy insects making a mighty buzz about a very little being.

NOVEMBER 11

Nothing menial, nothing contemptible remains in the inevitable relations of men, when once regarded as constituents of a Divine order. The lot which God provides, the trouble which he pities, the soul that he loves and visits cannot be beneath our patience and reverence: the scale of life within which he can hide his light is no ob-

ject of our anger or our scorn. Where self is dissolved in the all-sanctifying Presence, no guiltless experience can bring humiliation. The emancipated nature rises into repose; and attains the sweet and quiet mind which never sways from its own center; whose openness to love does not disturb its fidelity to duty; which passes through extremes of circumstance with a serene and touching constancy; and is so attuned that, whether caressed by summer winds or quivering before rending storms, it can give forth only harmony.

NOVEMBER 12

If the whole of life were distinct as a diagram before us and manageable as a machine; if we could command its issues and measure out its years; if, by our own skilled choice, we could determine our health, our genius, our family, our lot; if, further, each passing age of the world could lay out the next and foresee the future as it reads the past; we should have attained the Elysium of science and found the "Happy Islands" of civilized ambition. But in the literature of such a spot would be no poetry, in its music no hymn, in its architecture no cloister, in its voices no prayer: amid the staring daylight, no altar-lamp would be trimmed to keep the watch;

and, in the hard elastic air, no ear would listen for the faint steps of any Divine visitant.

NOVEMBER 13

All the pathetic appeals and reverend usages of life, the patient love, the costly pity lavished on sorrow and infirmity, all the graceful ceremonial of the affections at the birth, the marriage, and the funeral, assume that everywhere more *is* than *seems;* that whatever happens has holier meanings than we can tell; that the characters written on the screen are flung out by light behind. Take away the divine symbolism from our material existence, and let it stand only for what it can make good on its own account, and what is there to redeem it from selfishness and insignificance?

NOVEMBER 14

In every good man there are affections, moral impulses, aspirations, far more intense and deep than would accord with any secular proportions; and he becomes instantly aware of this if he falls into unsympathising society where he is put upon his self-defense. As soon as he tries to justify an enthusiasm, however true, and casts about for visible and definite grounds on which to rest

it, he is conscious of weakening it by the argument designed to give it strength; he feels that it has rights of its own beyond the reach of all his words; he is hurt that his advocacy, vainly struggling to speak for it, has but spoiled the charm with which it speaks for itself.

NOVEMBER 15

Ever since the gospel was first preached of Christ the risen, his disciples have set their affections on things above, and held this world in relatively light esteem; yet the heaven they sought remains as it was, and the earth they despised is enriched and glorified. Were *we* to contrive a way of improving this life, we should set men to think of nothing else: yet God contradicts this ruinous device, and reaches the end by drawing men away from it, and pre-engaging them with a higher.

NOVEMBER 16

While we are intent on divine things, God accomplishes the human. We are always planning how we may govern and mould the world according to our will: but he has made us susceptible of affections more powerful than our will, — passions beneath us that deliver us captive to Satan, — aspirations above us that lift us to Christ.

These it is that surprise and disappoint our calculations, and snatch us off to ends other than our own. These it is that so often seem to deny the race to the swift and the battle to the strong. These it is by which God rules the world and leads us in a path we have not known.

NOVEMBER 17

"Her sins are forgiven; for she loved much": — does the reason seem to you inadequate to the result? Remember what Divine forgiveness is, and alone can be. It is not a rescinding of the appointed sufferings of guilt. It is not a treatment of moral wrong as though it were moral right, or only neutral. It cannot alter the sinful past, or relieve it, by a single shade, of God's disapproval: he can never be brought to see it other than it is. But the act which is evil in itself is also an offense against Him who identifies his will with all that is good. And of this *personal alienation* forgiveness is the removal. Is it strange that it should be removed by *personal love*, and *not removed without it?*

NOVEMBER 18

What is it that ever separates us from God? It is simply the unlikeness of our minds to his;

— their low tastes and disproportioned desires; — their pride in what is nought to him, their indifference to what is all in all; — their devotion to the perishable *self* amid the flow of his everlasting love; — their slight of the truth he has so magnificently shown, and the holiness he has yet more awfully secreted in the very heart of things. We throw around us the self-evolved clouds of a nature neglected or debased, and then complain that his beams are hid: we plunge into ever deeper shades, and marvel that the Sun is under permanent eclipse. But the light of his countenance is steady and eternal; and it is ready to shine in again upon us, whenever affections go forth from us intense enough to perforate the mist.

NOVEMBER 19

It is only when the force of conscience ceases to be a propulsion in the dark, and stands before us transfigured with the glory of a Divine form, — only when it is discovered to be no mere part of ourselves, but the immediate real presence of the Holiest of all, that we are touched and caught up by its inspiration. Then it wins to itself the transcending power of a personal affection; and the spiritual impulse and the deepest love fall

into coalescence. Instead of distant obedience arises near communion: in place of a precarious and trembling will, toiling on the dust, we find the transporting wing of aspiration, and leave detaining weights behind. As for mere human strength and self-reliance, it cannot hold through this high race. Not long shall even young resolve press on without being weary; and the youthful spirits too often utterly fall. But they that, with trustful love, "wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength"; "they shall mount up on wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

NOVEMBER 20

"All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 'I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world.'" (Matthew xiii. 34, 35.) The parable, then, is a mode of uttering "things hidden"; of bringing to the light the deep-buried secrets of the heart, and drawing forth into consciousness those divine and primitive truths which have been set from the beginning in the firmament of the soul, but for want

of an interpreter have been taken for sparkles instead of suns. All the critics in the world, with their learned disquisitions on allegory and apologue and metaphor and simile, can never mend the prophet's idea of a parable, — so brief, so exact, so profound, — as a way of indicating realities hidden from the foundation of the world.

NOVEMBER 21

He who instructs by indirect and figurative methods, and, avoiding literal statements, delights in allusion and analogy, supposes one or both of two things; *viz.*, that his subject is incapable of direct presentation; or, that his hearers possess its fundamental ideas, and require, not its form within their thought, but its spirit in their souls. Both these assumptions appear to me to pervade the whole ministry of Christ; to have opened his lips in parables, as the natural speech of religion; and to explain, in part, why "never man spake like this man."

NOVEMBER 22

Religious belief is obliged to resort to the language of emblems, simply because its objects are all infinite in their nature, and respecting infinite

things the *literal* truth is unattainable and incommunicable. God, heaven, responsibility, are beyond the measure of our experience; vast as the atmosphere to the bird, or the forest to the child; regions whose circuit we cannot make, but which embrace us always, yet never shut us in. We were created in their midst; we dwell within them now; we can emerge from them no more. Our souls are subjects and not lords within this realm, — permitted only to do its appointed service and obey its nearest law.

NOVEMBER 23

God is a Spirit: and, besides this boundlessness of dimension, is infinite also in moral intensity; not, if we may say so, in quantity merely, but in quality too. Wisdom, beauty, holiness, are immeasurable things, which are appreciable by pure perceptions, but which no rule can gauge and no argument demonstrate. That the blush of morning is fair, that the quietude of grief is sacred, that the heroism of conscience is noble, — who will undertake to *prove* to one that does not see it?

NOVEMBER 24

In everything which we profoundly revere or

love, there appears a certain infinitude which fills us with untiring wonder and draws us into perpetual aspiration.

NOVEMBER 25

Religion is the manifestation of the heart's indestructible faith in perfection; and so it must ever dwell at the summit; and that which ceases to be *our highest* belongs no more to our religion, and yields to the conception that transcends it.

NOVEMBER 26

At best, when we try to speak to God, religion sinks with the utterance, and seems to become poor: the pure celestial thoughts, the deep and solemn wants, the sad and lowly confession, seem to come with intolerable friction from our rough human voice; and the inner skies of meditation, so vast and clear in silence, becloud themselves in speech. When Jesus loosened the imprisoned tongue, the noisy praises of the healed man were less expressive than the dumb looks with which before he had gazed upon the face of Jesus.

NOVEMBER 27

Language hides too little and defines too much to bring forth truly the things of God within us:

so that spoken religion is apt to pass into theology; and those who have it most upon their lips are very apt to have it least within their hearts.

NOVEMBER 28

The stately minster, whose vault overarches the dead, and whispers the sighs and plaints of the living; the picture of sacred story, giving to the present the silent beauty of the past without its familiarity; the gestures of holy men bending low in prayer; the organ's chant, contradicting no man's thought, and praying for all hearts with a sweet and mighty voice; these have been spontaneous creations from the soul of Christendom, heaving with the inspiration of God, and laboring to speak without spoiling a love so holy.

NOVEMBER 29

Of all great souls, of all steadfast and heroic lives, the ultimate basis is simple trust in God, and a profound sense of the divine significance and relations of our being here.

NOVEMBER 30

Intellectual integrity, moral tenacity, spiritual elevation, all alike involve, in their higher de-

grees, an unconditional trust in the everlasting sway of divine wisdom, justice, and love. Than the ability indeed to carry this feeling through every change, to hide it in the stricken heart, to fold it round the shivering lot, to drop it as an anchor and a stay into the tempestuous sea, to subsist wholly by it and in it, be appearances what they may, there can hardly be a more genuine mark of a grand and lovely nature. This it is that gives a majesty so pure and touching to the historic figure of Christ: self-abandonment to God, uttermost surrender, without reserve or stipulation, to the guidance of the Holy Spirit from the Soul of souls; pause in no darkness, hesitation in no perplexity, recoil in no extremity of anguish; but a gentle unfaltering hold of the invisible Hand, of the Only Holy and All Good; — these are the features that have made Jesus of Nazareth the dearest and most sacred image to the heart of so many ages.

A Martineau Year Book

:: DECEMBER ::

DECEMBER 1

O GOD, Unsearchable; why are we so blind to thee, who besettest us behind and before? In the daylight of thy constant mercy, we scarcely lift our eye to the infinite heaven whence it flows. Now screen us with thy hand, O Lord, that we may not wait for the night of sorrow, but here, under the shade of holy thought, may learn in what a world we live. Here let us rest from the weary shows of life, and converse with thee, the Only True. And though thou receivest higher praise than ours, from natures that know thee more and serve thee better, yet tune our spirits and join our voices with theirs; and unite us with the faithful and saintly, there and here, in one light of faith, one beauty of holiness, one repose on thee.

DECEMBER 2

In being alone with the truth of things, and passing from shows and shadows into communion

with the everlasting One, there is nothing at all impossible and out of reach. He is not faded or slow to bring us light, any more than is that sunshine of his, which is bright and swift as ever. He was no nearer to Christ on Tabor or in Gethsemane, than to us this day and every day. Neither the nature he inspires, nor his perennial inspiration, grows any older with the lapse of time; every human being that is born is a first man, fresh in this creation, and as open to Heaven as if Eden were spread round him; and every blessed kindling of faith and new sanctity is a touch of his spirit as living, a gift as immediate from his exhaustless store of holy power, as the strength that befriended Christ in temptation, and the angel-calm that closed his agony.

DECEMBER 3

It is not right to live as if God were asleep, and Heaven only a murmur from his dreams.

DECEMBER 4

It should make some difference to a man whether his Creator be here in the present, or gone off into the past; whether he himself dwells in the hollow of a living hand, or, with nothing beyond him but necessity, struggles for his place

in a dead, deserted world. And this difference will not be realized, nor any lofty truth of character attained, by those who disown the claims of lonely thought and silence in religion.

DECEMBER 5

Is it not promised for ever to the pure in heart that they shall see God? Let any true man go into silence; strip himself of all pretense, and selfishness, and sensuality, and sluggishness of soul; lift off thought after thought, passion after passion, till he reaches the inmost depth of all; remember how short a time, and he was not at all; how short a time again, and he will not be here; open his window and look upon the night, how still its breath, how solemn its march, how deep its perspective, how ancient its forms of light; and think how little he knows except the perpetuity of God and the mysteriousness of life: — and it will be strange if he does not feel the Eternal Presence as close upon his soul as the breeze upon his brow; if he does not say, "O Lord, art Thou ever near as this, and have I not known thee?" — if the true proportions and the genuine spirit of life do not open on his heart with infinite clearness, and show him the littleness of his temptations, and the grandeur of his trust. He

is ashamed to have found weariness in toil so light, and tears where there was no trial to the brave. He discovers with astonishment how small the dust that has blinded him, and from the height of a quiet and holy love looks down with incredulous sorrow on the jealousies and fears and irritations that have vexed his life. A mighty wind of resolution sets in strong upon him, and freshens the whole atmosphere of his soul; sweeping down before it the light flakes of difficulty till they vanish like snow upon the sea. He is imprisoned no more in a small compartment of time, but belongs to an eternity which is now and here. The isolation of his separate spirit passes away; and with the countless multitude of souls akin to God, he is but as a wave of his unbounded deep. He is at one with Heaven, and hath found the secret place of the Almighty.

DECEMBER 6

Silence is in truth the attribute of God; and those who seek him from that side invariably learn that meditation is not the dream but the reality of life; not its illusion but its truth; not its weakness but its strength.

Even when the right is clearly *seen*, meditation is needed to collect our powers to *do* it. It is

the great store-house of our spiritual dynamics, where divine energies lie hid for any enterprise, and the hero is strengthened for his field. All great things are born of silence.

DECEMBER 7

Nowhere can you find any beautiful work, any noble design, any durable endeavor, that was not matured in long and patient silence, ere it spake out in its accomplishment. *There* it is that we accumulate the inward power which we distribute and spend in action; put the smallest duty before us in dignified and holy aspects; and reduce the severest hardships beneath the foot of our self-denial. There it is that the soul, enlarging all its dimensions at once, acquires a greater and more vigorous being, and gathers up its collective forces to bear down upon the piecemeal difficulties of life, and scatter them to dust. There alone can we enter into that spirit of self-abandonment by which we take up the cross of duty, however heavy, and tread the dolorous way with feet however worn and bleeding. And thither shall we return again, only into higher peace and more triumphant power, when the labor is over and the victory won, and we are called by death into God's loftiest watch-tower of contemplation.

DECEMBER 8

There are, within the range of every man's life, processes of mind which must be solitary; passages of duty which throw him absolutely upon his individual moral forces, and admit of no aid whatever from another. Alone we must stand sometimes; and if our better nature is not to shrink into weakness, we must take with us the thought which was the strength of Christ: "Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me."

DECEMBER 9

That is the most finished character which begins in beauty and ends in power; which wins its way to loftiness through a host of angelic humanities that would sometimes hold it back; that leans on the love of kindred while it may, and when it may not, can stand erect in the love of God; that shelters itself amid the domesticities of life, while duty wills, and when it forbids, can go forth under the expanse of immortality, and face any storm that beats and traverse any wilderness that lies beneath that canopy.

DECEMBER 10

The management of the character, the correction of evil habits, the suppression of wrong desires, the creation of new virtues, — this is a work

strictly individual, with which no "stranger intermeddleth," in which the sympathy of friends may be deceptive, and our only safety is in a superhuman reliance.

DECEMBER 11

The relation of the human being to God is altogether personal: there can be no partnership in its responsibilities. Our moral convictions must have an undivided allegiance; and to withhold our reverence till they are supported by the suffrages of others is an insult which they will not bear.

DECEMBER 12

What can those even who read us best know of our weaknesses and wants and capabilities? They would have to clothe themselves with our very consciousness before they could be fit advisers here. How often does their very affection become our temptation, cheat us out of our contrition, and lead us to adopt some pleasant theory about ourselves, in place of the stern and melancholy truth!

DECEMBER 13

At best, we must often have to forego all sympathy: none can be with us in our multiform

temptations. Many a purpose fit only for ourselves, suited to the peculiarities of our own character and condition, we must take up in private, and in silence pile up effort after effort, till it be accomplished. And in these lonely struggles of duty, in this invisible repression of wrong impulses and maintenance of great aims, the inevitable loss of human aid must be replaced by our affinity with God. While He is with us we are not alone. He that invented human virtue, and breathed unto us our private veneration for its greatness, — He that loves the martyr spirit, scorning suffering for the sake of truth, — He that beholds in every faithful mind the reflection of himself, — He that hath built an everlasting world, at once the shelter of victorious goodness and the theater of its yet nobler triumphs, — enwraps us in his immensity, and sustains us by his love.

DECEMBER 14

The sooner we learn to lean on Him, and find comfort in the society of God, the better are we prepared for every solemn passage of our existence.

DECEMBER 15

It is well, ere we depart, to confide ourselves

sometimes to the invisible: for *then* at least we must be thrust forth upon it in a solitude personal as well as moral. The dying make that pass alone: human voices fade away; human forms retire; familiar scenes sink from sight; and silent and lonely the spirit migrates to the great secret. Who would not feel himself then beneath the all-sheltering wing, and say amid the mystic space, "I am not alone, for the Father is with me"?

DECEMBER 16

To the eye of the Man of sorrows, sorrow was no sin: nor did he, who was emphatically the Son of God, see, in even the passionate utterance of grief, any of that spirit of filial distrust towards God and reluctant acceptance of his will, which have often been charged on it by the hard and cold temper of his followers.

DECEMBER 17

Taking the gospel to afford a promise, not of the extinction of human nature in heaven, but of its perpetuity, — an assurance not that we shall be converted into chill and pious phantoms, but simply elevated into immortal men, — I would gather from that hope a deeper veneration for all the pure tastes and natural feelings of a good

mind; I would maintain the sanctity of human joy and human grief; I would protest against all stern censure on the outbreaks of true sorrow; and would plead that to mourn, — ay, and with broken spirit, — the departure of virtue and of love, is — not a resistance to a Father's will, not an oblivion of his Providence, not the expression of an ignoble selfishness, not a mistrust of a restoring heaven; but only a fitting homage to God's most benignant gifts, the grateful glance of a loving eye on blessings, than which nothing more holy, more peaceful, more exalting, is conferred by a guardian benevolence on man.

DECEMBER 18

Those who blame as unchristian the deep grief which bereavement awakens, must extend their disapprobation much farther, and censure all strong human attachments. Sorrow is not an independent state of mind, standing unconnected with all others. It could not be canceled singly, leaving all other qualities of our nature in their integrity. It is the effect, and under the present conditions of our being the inevitable effect, of strong affections. Nay, it is not so much their result, as a certain attitude of those affections themselves.

DECEMBER 19

It is useless expatiating on the evils which strong grief inflicts on ourselves and others: you are bound to show that the affections, of which it is an inseparable form, contain no counteracting good; that it is more blessed, more holy, to freeze up the springs of emotion, than to suffer them perennially to fertilize our nature, though they sometimes deluge it; that it is better to keep loose from all that is human, and love nothing that we may lose. You cannot sever them: grief and love must stay or go together.

DECEMBER 20

Who can doubt that *that* is the truest duty to God which permits to us the most disinterested heart for each other; *that* the purest devotion which sanctifies and not chills our affections; *that* the most genuine trust which dares to cultivate to the utmost sympathies wounded here and serenely blest only hereafter; *that* the most filial hope which, regarding the brotherhood of man as an inference from the paternity of God, looks to heaven as to another home?

DECEMBER 21

A certain number of animal lives, that are of

prescribed ages, that eat and drink together, and that sleep under the same roof, by no means make a family. Almost as well might we say that it is the bricks of a house that make a home. There may be a home in the forest or the wilderness; and there may be a family, with all its blessings, though half its members be in foreign lands, or in another world. It is the gentle memories, the mutual thought, the desire to bless, the sympathies that meet when duties are apart, the fervor of the parents' prayers, the persuasion of filial love, the sister's pride and the brother's benediction, that constitute the true elements of domestic life and sanctify the dwellings of our birth. Abolish the sentiments which pervade and animate the machinery and movements of our social being, and their whole value obviously disappears.

DECEMBER 22

The objects of affection are nothing to us but for the affection which they excite; it is for this that they exist; this removed, their relation loses its identity; this preserved, it undergoes no essential change. Friends are assigned to us for the sake of friendship; and homes for the sake of love; and while they perform these offices in our hearts, in essence and in spirit they are with

us still. The very tears we shed over their loss are proofs that they are not lost; for what is grief, but love itself restricted to acts of memory and longing for its other tasks, — imprisoned in the past, and striving vainly to be free? The cold hearts that never deeply mourn lose nothing, for they have no stake to lose: the genial souls that deem it no shame to weep, give evidence that they have, fresh and living still, the sympathies, to nurture which our human ties are closely drawn.

DECEMBER 23

God only lends us the objects of our affection; the affection itself he gives us in perpetuity. In this best sense, instances are not rare in which the friend or the parent then first begins to live for us, when death has withdrawn him from our eyes, and given him over exclusively to our hearts: at least I have known a mother among the sainted blest, sway the will of a thoughtful child far more than her living voice; brood with a kind of serene omnipresence over his affections and sanctify his passing thought by the mild vigilance of her pure and loving eye.

DECEMBER 24

Jesus was never so much one with his disciples, as when he was no longer with them: they were

never so widely severed from him, as when, with unawakened and dim-discerning heart, they lingered around him with eyes so holden that they did not know him. The nearest in person may clearly be the furthest in soul: they may eat at the same table, and morning and night exchange the greeting and the parting look, yet each remain outside the spirit of the other, — severed even by an impassible chasm, to which the earth's diameter would be less than an arm's length. But where the inner being, rather than the mere outer, has been passed together, and we have found in some fraternal heart the appointed confessional for the doubts and strife and sorrowful resolves of our existence, no amount of land or water can break the mutual affiliation: the reciprocation of pity and of trust, the placid memories, the joint courage to bear well the solemn weight of life, which enrich a present love, may consecrate the absent too. Nay, distance may even set a human life in truer and more affectionate aspect before us, by stripping off its trivialities, and bringing out its essential features, and urging our thought to conceive it as a whole from its beginning to its close: and in the want of any lighter union, we fold ourselves in the embrace of the same divine laws, and compassion for the same mortal lot.

DECEMBER 25

There is a domesticity that cannot be absorbed by the interval between two spheres of being; — a love that cannot be lost amid the immensity, but finds the surest track across the void; — a home-affinity that penetrates the skies, and enters as the morning or the evening guest. And it is Jesus of Nazareth who has effected this; — has entered under the same household name, and formed into the same class the dwellers above and those beneath. Spirits *there*, and spirits *here*, are gathered by him into one group; and where before was saddest exile, he has made a blest fraternity.

DECEMBER 26

Members of the same home cannot dwell together without either the memory or the expectation of some mutual and mortal farewell. There is no one of mature affections from whose arms some blessing of the heart, — parent, sister, child, — has not died away, and slipped, not as once into extinction, but (chief thanks to the Son of Man) into eternity. All we who dwell in this visible scene can think of kindred souls that have vanished from us into the invisible. These does Jesus keep dwelling near our hearts; making

still one family of those in heaven and those on earth.

DECEMBER 27

Neither to God's power nor to our faith does death present any serious perplexity, if it be only the migration of a spirit that does not cease to live. Thus regarded, it interposes nothing but physical distance between us and the objects of our affectionate remembrance. While we poor wayfarers still toil, with hot and bleeding feet, along the highway and the dust of life, our companions have but mounted the divergent path, to explore the more sacred streams, and visit the diviner vales, and wander amid the everlasting Alps, of God's upper province of creation.

DECEMBER 28

God has so framed our memory that it is the infirmities of noble souls which chiefly fall into the shadows of the past; while whatever is fair and excellent in their lives comes forth from the gloom in ideal beauty, and leads us on through the wilds and mazes of our mortal way. Nor does the retrospect, thus glorified, deceive us by any fallacy; for things present with us we comprehend far less completely, and appreciate less

impartially, than things past. Nothing can become a clear object of our thought while we ourselves are in it: we understand not our childhood till we have left it; our youth till it has departed; our life itself till it verges to its close; or the majesty of genius and holiness till we look back on them as fled.

DECEMBER 29

Each portion of our human experience becomes in succession intelligible to us as we quit it for a new point of view. God has stationed us at the intersecting line between the known and the unknown: he has planted us on a floating island of mystery, from which we survey the expanse behind in the clear light of experience and truth, and cleave the waves, invisible, yet ever breaking, of the unbounded future. Our very progress, which is our peculiar glory, consists in at once losing and learning the past; in gaining fresh stations from which to take a wiser retrospect, and become more deeply aware of the treasures we have used. We are never so conscious of the succession of blessings which God's Providence has heaped on us, as when lamenting the lapse of years; and are then richest in the fruits of time, when mourning that time steals those fruits away.

DECEMBER 30

Eternal God, for whom no dawn arises and no evening sets, who hast no weary days, no passive hours! again at night-fall we bless thee for giving the rest thou never needest. Thy everlasting work is ever fresh and holy as thine inmost thought: yet hast thou pity on us, whose burden weighs down our mortal strength and cries out for the wing of immortal power. The failures of this day we lay with sorrow at thy feet. Yet not with faint hearts, not with binding fears, but with a childlike trust, do we cast our weakness on thy strength for a better morrow, and look for thee to lift up thy countenance upon us and show us light.

Clear, O Lord, our inward vision, that we may see through the false shows of life, and be kept quiet and true by thy great realities. Waken us all from the dreams of the earthly mind in its forgetfulness of thee. Reveal to the young, O thou Supreme Inspirer, what it is to live this great life of opportunity; and fill them with the pure and undefiled religion which will keep them unspotted from the world. And in the hearts of elders let not the fires die or their work linger, till they are overtaken by the fading light and lengthening shadows of their set time. Know-

ing nothing of the morrow, may we rejoice to be faithful to-day; gladly accepting the humblest task that waits for us by thy will and shines with the holy light of thine approval.

DECEMBER 31

Eternal God, who hast neither dawn nor evening, yet sendest us alternate mercies of the darkness and the day; there is no light but thine, without, within. As thou liftest the curtain of night from our abodes, take also the veil from all our hearts. Rise with thy morning upon our souls: quicken all our labor and our prayer: and though all else declines, let the noontide of thy grace and peace remain. May we walk, while it is yet day, in the steps of him who, with fewest hours, finished thy divinest work. *Amen.*

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